



BOARD MINUTES
BOARD OF WRIGHT COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
FEBRUARY 26, 2019

Christine Husom	District 1
Darek Vetsch	District 2
Mark Daleiden	District 3
Michael Potter	District 4
Charles Borrell	District 5

DATE APPROVED: MARCH 5, 2019

The Wright County Board met in regular session at 9:00 A.M. with Husom, Vetsch, Potter and Borrell present. Commissioner Daleiden was absent.

COUNTY BOARD MINUTES 2-12-19

Husom moved to approve the minutes. The motion was seconded by Borrell and carried 5-0.

AGENDA

Daleiden moved to add the following item to the Consent Agenda. The motion was seconded by Potter and carried 5-0:

- Consent Item F, "Auditor/Treasurer, Schedule Ditch Committee Of The Whole Meeting For 3-05-19 at 1:00 P.M. For County Ditch 10" (Hiivala)

The following changes were made to the Agenda:

- Discuss Committee Minutes prior to the 9:30 A.M. Public Hearing
- Move the 9:20 A.M. Agenda Item to 9:35 A.M., "Alicia O'Hare, Water Resource Specialist-Wright Soil & Water Conservation District, Approval of the 2015 Wright Regional Inspection Program" (Vetsch)

Borrell moved to approve the Agenda as amended. The motion was seconded by Daleiden and carried 5-0.

CONSENT AGENDA

Borrell moved to approve the Consent Agenda as amended. The motion was seconded by Husom and carried 5-0:

- A. ADMINISTRATION
 - 1. Claim - Madden, Galanter & Hansen, LLP, Jan 2019 Services, \$5,109.22
- B. ATTORNEY
 - 1. Authorize Signatures On Memorandum of Understanding Between The County Of Wright And The Town Of Rockford regarding Planning and Zoning services
- C. AUDITOR/TREASURER
 - 1. Acknowledge Warrants Issued Between February 6, 2019 And February 19, 2019
- D. HIGHWAY
 - 1. Position Replacement:
 - A. Highway Maintenance Worker
- E. SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT
 - 1. Appointments To The Water Management Task Force:
 - A. Appoint Kevin Dahlman To The Citizen At-Large Position, Three-Year Term Ending 12-31-21
 - B. Reappoint Darek Vetsch As The District 2 Representative, Three-Year Term Ending 12-31-21
 - C. Reappoint Bob Peterson To The Sportsman Position, Three-Year Term Ending 12-31-21

TIMED AGENDA ITEMS

SEAN DERINGER, SHERIFF

Introduce Newly Promoted Sergeant Michael Lindquist To The Board

Deringer introduced Lindquist who was promoted to the position of Patrol Sergeant, effective 2-15-19. Lindquist has an 18-year career with the Wright County Sheriff's office and has worked in the detective and narcotics units.

TONY RASMUSON, COUNTY ASSESSORSchedule The 2019 County Board Of Appeal And Equalization Meeting

Husom moved to set the County Board of Appeal and Equalization meeting for 6-17-19 at 4:00 P.M. This is in accordance with Minnesota Statute 274.14. The motion was seconded by Daleiden. Husom and Daleiden agreed to amend the motion to include appeals being filed by the end of the business on 6-10-19 and that appointments are required to meet with the County Board of Appeal and Equalization. The motion carried 5-0.

BRIAN J. ASLESON, CHIEF DEPUTY ATTORNEYAuthorize Signatures On Purchase Agreement Between Wright County And Howard And Mary Bremmer

Asleson said this involves the remaining parcel near the Law Enforcement Center and the Justice Center. The Bremmer's have signed the purchase agreement and closing is tentatively scheduled for 3-01-19 at 2:00 P.M.

Potter moved to approve and authorize signatures on the purchase agreement between Wright County and Howard and Mary Bremmer, PID #103-500-172203. The motion was seconded by Husom and carried 5-0.

BOB HIIVALA, AUDITOR/TREASURERApprove January Revenue/Expenditure Budget Report

Potter moved to accept the Report. The motion was seconded by Borrell and carried 5-0.

Approve A Plat "West Ridge" (Rockford Township)

Hiivala said the fees have been collected and signatures are in place. Borrell moved to approve the plat. The motion was seconded by Husom and carried 5-0.

CHERI NELSON, IT TECHNICAL SERVICES MANAGERApprove Out Of State Travel For One Sr. System Engineer To Attend The Cisco Live Conference June 9-13, 2019 In San Diego, CA

Nelson explained the travel is included in the budget. The conference has proven to be beneficial to the IT Department in the past.

Husom moved to approve out of state travel for the Sr. System Engineer as requested for the Cisco Live Conference. The motion was seconded by Borrell and carried 5-0.

VIRGIL HAWKINS, HIGHWAY ENGINEERApprove Agreement No. 18-52 For The CSAH 19 And CSAH 38 (70th Street) Reconstruction Project Within The City Limits Of Albertville And Otsego

The agreement outlines the funding participation, construction and maintenance activities for this upcoming project between the cities of Albertville, Otsego, the Joint Powers Board, and Wright County. The project includes the reconstruction of CSAH 19 from the intersection of the mall entrance to CSAH 38 and the reconstruction of CSAH 38 from CSAH 19 to Maciver Avenue.

Potter moved to approve Agreement No. 18-52. The motion was seconded by Daleiden and carried 5-0.

Approve Amendment To Agreement No. 18-52 For The CSAH 19 And CSAH 38 (70th Street) Reconstruction Project Within The City Limits Of Albertville And Otsego

The amendment outlines specific items related to the City of Albertville regarding the funding participation, construction, and maintenance responsibilities for the portion of CSAH 19 south of the federal grant portion of the CSAH 19 project, between Albertville and Wright county.

Potter moved to approve the Amendment to Agreement No. 18-52. The motion was seconded by Borrell and carried 5-0.

Adopt A Resolution Supporting The Application For Local Road Improvement Program (LRIP) Funds To Go Towards The County's Share Of Improvements To CSAH 19 As Part Of The I-94 Project In Albertville

If awarded, this funding will be used towards the County's cost share of the CSAH 19 improvements as part of the I-94 improvements in Albertville. The County's cost share is estimated at \$1.3 million and the LRIP grant

application is requested at \$1 million which is the maximum grant allowed. There are currently no LRIP funds available; however, there may be funds allocated during the legislative session that could fund the program.

Potter moved to adopt Resolution #19-23 supporting the application for LRIP Funds to go towards the County's share of improvements to CSAH 19 as part of the I-94 Project in Albertville. The motion was seconded by Husom and carried 5-0 on a roll call vote.

Adopt A Resolution Of Support For The City of Annandale's Local Road Improvement Program (LRIP) Application

If awarded, the funding will be used by the City to make improvements to the City of Annandale's side streets in conjunction with MnDOT's planned improvements to TH 24 in 2020. Hawkins said the County will serve as the sponsor for the City's project, as their population is under 5,000.

Potter moved to adopt Resolution #19-24 in support of the City of Annandale's LRIP Application. The motion was seconded by Daleiden and carried 5-0 on a roll call vote.

ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION

2-12-19 COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE (COTW) MINUTES

At today's County Board Meeting, Daleiden moved to approve the minutes. The motion was seconded by Husom and carried 5-0. The minutes follow:

I. Regional Aquatic Invasive Species Inspection Program

County Board Chair Darek Vetsch said the purpose of this meeting is to discuss the merits and future of the Wright Regional Aquatic Invasive Species Inspection Program (WRIP).

Alicia O'Hare, Water Management Specialist, Wright Soil and Water Conservation District, reviewed data from the PowerPoint presentation titled, "Wright Regional Inspections 2019" (see attached), including nine lakes proposed to join the WRIP in 2019, operating hours of each location, and the projected budget. Also attached is an email to Vetsch from Paul Miller, and a list of members of the public who attended (see attachments).

Vetsch opened the meeting for public comment.

Vern Wagner, Vice President, Anglers for Habitat: Wagner said voluntary decontamination should increase, and information should be disseminated regarding how to prevent the spread of Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS).

Russ Fortner, President, Greater Lake Sylvia Association (GLSA): Fortner said the GLSA has been involved with WRIP from the beginning. The Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) has begun hiring and training inspectors. The only way the AIS problem will be resolved is through a collaborative effort by the County, the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR), people who fish, lake associations, and the WRIP. If not, the lakes will deteriorate. Fortner said the inspection process should be more thorough.

Kathy Jonsrud, Annandale: Jonsrud supports WRIP and its expansion for 2019. The Cedar Lake Association is ready to join. While there are still things to work out, inspectors are better trained, and courtesy decontaminations are provided freely.

Mike Zieska, Secretary/Treasurer, Wright Soil & Water Board of Supervisors and Resident, Annandale: Zieska said the new AIS Advisory Group is making good strides to make sure boats are cleaned and inspected properly. The lake associations in the area have been spending between \$40,000 and \$80,000 per year to keep the lakes clean for everyone. They are not trying to keep people off the lakes, but rather are trying to keep them clean for future generations.

Vern Wagner: The mission of Anglers for Habitat is to bring their voice to conversations about access, AIS, and aquatic plant management. They want to prevent AIS. They believe in pilot projects. AIS has been

2-12-19 COTW MINUTES (cont.):

slowed but not completely prevented. Anglers for Habitat are concerned that WRIP does not have a focus on AIS prevention. Boats are not examined when they exit. Boats go in and out at public access points as well as at private docks. He suggested installing cameras at access points. He requested a meeting for anglers to express their views before WRIP expands. Wagner also said exit inspections and decontamination should be made available. Although the lake associations are not trying to discourage boaters from coming to the lakes, the result is that inspections and decontamination sites are driving people away.

O'Hare said in 2016 there were 155 decontaminations. In 2017 there were 332. By 2018 it dropped to 242. There was some loss of visibility for the decontamination site in 2018 as it could not be seen from the highway. The number of license plates documented going through decontamination in 2016 was 96, 494 in 2017, and 185 in 2018. In 2016 on Lake Sylvia there were 2,169 license plates observed. The DNR saw another 179. In 2017 the SWCD saw 1,862, the DNR saw 164, and in 2018 1,428 license plates were observed at the regional inspection station. Between 2016 to 2018, the number of license plates observed by inspectors dropped by about 34%.

Commissioner Christine Husom said exit inspections were considered, but they are hard to enforce. People are required by State law to make sure their boats are cleaned and decontaminated.

Vern Wagner: Exit inspections are being done by DNR AIS Level 1 and 2 inspectors in every other county, on every other lake where inspectors are provided. He cited Stearns, Douglas, Aikin, and Morrison Counties and described the thoroughness of those inspectors. Wagner said those counties hired inspectors.

Vetsch said Wright County indirectly delegates the authority to hire inspectors to Wright SWCD.

Chris Hector, Greater Lake Sylvia Association and WRIP: Hector said he favors exit inspections and asked for them previously. They are difficult to implement and enforce. Exit inspections are only one technique for AIS prevention. It is important to look at the number of inspections to determine the overall effectiveness of the program. Inspections under WRIP improved by 55 percent. WRIP focused on Lake Sylvia. Many lakes do not have the money to launch a full-scale inspection program. He said WRIP numbers are very low. The DNR cannot solve this alone. Allocations for inspectors go down each year. The boost from State aid is not enough. Until this becomes a more efficient process, the desired value won't be realized. Critical components this year are enforcement (which must be scalable and efficient), increasing the number of lakes with inspections, and adding more centrally located decontamination units. The program gets better if more regional inspection stations are added. Hector said it is important not to stop but continue moving forward.

Tony Graham, President, Maple Lake Property Owners Association: Last December the Association sent out an email survey seeking guidance from lake association members and nonmembers. The response was good – 85 percent were in favor of WRIP. A township meeting held in January was attended by 48 people (which represents about 41 properties), with 85 percent again in favor of pursuing membership in WRIP. Maple Lake has two AIS: Eurasian Milfoil and Flowering Rush. The National Oceanic Atmospheric Administration reports that there are 184 AIS in the Upper Great Lakes Ecosystem. AIS came to the County via the St. Lawrence River, the Great Lakes, the Duluth harbor, and onto boats to this region. If two people were posted at both Maple Lake accesses ten to twelve hours a day for \$10 per hour for four months out of the year, the cost would be between \$28,000 to \$30,000 per year. WRIP is not perfect, but it is making progress. He hopes more inspection sites are added. He urged everyone to be more diligent about protecting County lakes.

Vetsch said the WRIP program is good if barriers such as enforcement could be overcome. Currently it appears that the only people being policed are those who are following the law. He needs more information to determine whether the program prevents AIS and is enforceable.

Josh Engelmann, French Lake: Engelmann asked who sits on the governance council for the WRIP.

Vetsch said there is an Advisory Committee. There is no governing body. The Ordinance that allows them to operate is held by the County. The enforcement is done through a contract with the Sheriff's Office. It is

2-12-19 COTW MINUTES (cont.):

administered through SWCD.

O'Hare said the Governance Council is the previous name for the Wright Regional Inspection Program (WRIP) and is comprised of participating lake associations. An AIS Advisory Committee was formed in addition to WRIP.

Josh Engelmann: The initial push came from property owners and not sportsmen. Engelmann asked whether traffic is getting pushed to French Lake from lakes where inspections occur. He has never seen a rover. He asked how the \$168,000 from the Initiative Foundation will be replaced when that money dries up. Will lake associations have to make up the difference? Have local business owners been included in the process? Will funds for fish stocking diminish because traffic on French Lake is going down? All lakes within a certain radius should be required to be in the program.

Vetsch said the goal is to prevent AIS. The County is trying to find a compromise that achieves what each side seeks. In the next year Vetsch hopes to get answers regarding whether WRIP is expandable, enforceable, and affordable. Funding is inconsistent and unpredictable since lake associations determine their own contributions.

Ron Elsner, Treasurer, Sugar Lake Association: Elsner said the Sugar Lake Association supports the WRIP program. Sugar Lake has its own robust inspection program at the ramp. The association has budgeted \$25,000 for the past three years to combat AIS. This covers two ramps, with one inspector at each for ten hours per day, three days a week, for 20 weeks out of the year. The funds represent the allocation from SWCD for inspection services. That is the amount the Sugar Lake Association has decided to contribute to the WRIP. According to SWCD data, 4700 inspections were conducted at Sugar Lake ramps last year. Of those, 2000 were exit inspections. The inspectors made corrections on nearly 400. These were people leaving the lake who forgot to do certain things such as pull their bilge plug or who had vegetation on their trailers or boats. Elsner said exit inspections protect other lakes in the region. Sugar Lake has spent \$30,000 per year for the last ten years on whole lake treatment. The association supports WRIP and thinks it is the right way to go. They are getting ready to reaffirm their participation. He recommended balancing the ability to do both exit and entrance inspections.

Blaine Barkley, Annandale, Chair of Invasive Species Committee on Lake Sylvia: Barkley said this year the Lake Sylvia association will spend close to \$50,000 to keep the lake as clean as possible. They will treat the lake for Starry Stonewort four times during the summer as they have for the last two years. They also treat for Curly Leaf and Eurasian Milfoil. Barkley said most of the best fishing lakes in northern Minnesota all have AIS. A few years before Starry Stonewort was found in Lake Sylvia, six or nine boats launched that had come from Lake Koronis. It is no surprise that Lake Sylvia ended up with Starry Stonewort. The Lake Sylvia Association gave up \$25,000 for inspections. The association inspects at the landing and has divers go to other places in the lake to check for AIS to make certain the infestation is under control. The association has been quite successful keeping Starry Stonewort down to a bare minimum and will continue to check every year to minimize the danger. AIS treatment cost exceeds the lake association dues. Every new infestation is an additional cost.

Jefferson Bishop, Annandale: Bishop said he is a lake property owner, a business owner, a lake service provider, and the contractor for this program. In many scenarios, his interests are conflicted. The viewpoint that this program is a negative for business is shortsighted. Lakes are a resource and need to be protected. The WRIP is the most efficient model for this County. As a lakeshore property owner, Bishop said something needs to be done. As a lake service provider, he opposes it due to its inconvenience. The costs of transports and operating have gone up significantly. As a lake service provider, Bishop said he is one of the greatest risks to the lakes. He brings docks and barges from lake to lake. He said if he wants to do his part to protect this resource, that is the cost of doing business. Without the quality of our lakes, his business doesn't exist.

Commissioner Charles Borrell asked how Initiative Foundation funds would be replaced when that source ends. The County is asked to expand a pilot program which is not sustainable. Hector said the WRIP budget

2-12-19 COTW MINUTES (cont.):

needs to be managed like any other. Adding more lakes will leverage the program. The State, lake owners, and boaters will have to raise more funds. If the program numbers roughly doubled, it could potentially cover all of Wright County. Hector encouraged the County Board not to give up on the regional inspection model. He said it doesn't scale yet. He suggested reviewing the program over the next year when more data is compiled.

Borrell said in the western states take AIS very seriously. Unless Minnesota does the same, it will just be a matter of time before AIS overwhelms all lakes. He suggested initiating a State law that would require boat owners to keep a log book or smart phone app that would be associated with the owner's boat license number. Before launching the boat on any lake, the owner would enter it into the log. Switching to another lake should require decontamination. Not doing so would be considered a violation with subsequent penalties. Regional decontamination station workers could make an entry in the log or note each decontamination in the app. Borrell said that would go a long way toward addressing the AIS problem.

Husom said she appreciates the efforts of those who have worked hard to find solutions.

Vetsch said the minutes from this meeting will go to the 2-26-19 Wright County Board meeting. There will be no recommendation since two Commissioners were not able to attend. At the 2-26-19 meeting, the Board will do one of three things: 1) Repeal the AIS Ordinance and end the pilot program; 2) Amend the Ordinance to add lakes; or 3) Leave it as is going forward.

Vetsch encouraged everyone to contact their County Commissioner with any comments or questions. Husom said any group interested in meeting with the AIS Advisory Committee should let her know.

Vetsch said this public hearing will remain open until the 2-26-19 County Board meeting. If the Ordinance is amended at that time, a new public hearing process will begin. Anyone who wishes their comments from today to be included in that public hearing should resubmit them to the County Board or County Administration prior to 2-26-19.

Greg Kryzer, Assistant County Attorney, said there will need to be a new public hearing if the County Board moves to amend the Ordinance. This public hearing was regarding how to proceed with the WRIP going forward.

Susan Vergin, Assistant County Administrator, clarified that this was a meeting to take public comment, but it was not a public hearing.

Recommendation: Information only.

COTW Minutes submitted by Deb Schreiner, Administrative Specialist

(End of 2-12-19 COTW Minutes)

2-19-19 COUNTY BOARD WORKSHOP MINUTES

At today's County Board Meeting, Husom moved to approve the minutes. The motion was seconded by Daleiden and carried 5-0. The Workshop Minutes follow:

I. Communications Regarding Facilities Projects

The Board discussed items to include in a presentation regarding the facilities projects in the County.

II. Review of Board Room Layout & Commissioner Areas

BKV Group provided an overview of the latest iterations of the design of the County Board Room and County Board areas.

2-19-19 COUNTY BOARD WORKSHOP MINUTES (cont.):**III. Scheduling of Future Workshops & Strategic Planning**

The Board discussed the potential of changing County Board Workshops from the third Tuesday of the month to the second Tuesday of the month. This change is being suggested because of the timing of committee dates and sending the committee minutes/recommendations to the County Board for approval.

Consensus:

- *Move Wright County Board Workshops to the second Tuesday of the month at 10:00 A.M. The Workshops will start at 9:00 A.M. on dates when the Quarterly Leadership Team Meetings are held.*
- *Upcoming Workshop Agendas:*

March 12

- *Commissioner webs pages and social media*
- *Child Protection: Taking a look at Safe Families (implemented in Anoka County) and Families First (proposed new legislative changes)*

April 9

- *Legislative issues for the County 2020*
- *Update by Flaherty/Hood on power plant legislation or prospects of change in the future*

May 14

- *Financial forecasting prior to budget process*
- *Update on current CIP projects and looking forward to 2020 projects, CIP fund balance*
- *101 on County investments and fund balances*

June 11

- *Strategic Planning on budget*

Workshop Minutes submitted by Susan Backes, Clerk to the County Board

(End of 2-19-19 County Board Workshop Minutes)

2-20-19 COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE (COTW) MINUTES

At today's County Board Meeting, Borrell moved to approve the COTW Minutes. The motion was seconded by Husom and carried 5-0. The COTW Minutes follow:

I. Public Meeting RE: Building Facilities

County Board Chair Darek Vetsch opened with a PowerPoint presentation titled "Government Center Future" (see attached). Also attached is a list of members of the public who attended the meeting.

Vetsch said a decision regarding whether to remodel the current Government Center, build a new one next to the new Justice Center, or some other option will be made within a few months. Commissioner Borrell said the County Board and staff have gathered information about various options for many months. While there was a cost to do so, it was necessary to make the decision that best utilizes taxpayer dollars.

Vetsch reviewed the four options:

- A) Remodel the current Government Center and move Health and Human Services staff to that site. Sell the old Health and Human Services Building at 1004 Commercial Drive in Buffalo.*
- B) Make required repairs to the Government Center, and leave areas vacated by the Courts, Court Services, and the Attorney's Office as is.*
- C) Construct a new Government Center adjacent to the new Justice Center.*
- D) Build a new Health and Human Services building adjacent to the new Justice Center, make required repairs to the current Government Center and leave vacated areas alone.*

2-20-19 COTW MINUTES (cont.):

A member of the public asked why the space in the former jail area couldn't be used to expand space within the current Government Center. Vetsch said the nature of the construction makes it cost prohibitive to remodel. He reviewed the pages titled, "Factors to Consider."

John Uecker, Albion Township: Uecker said the problem is making room for Health and Human Services (HHS). He suggested that the County build a smaller building for HHS instead of tearing down the current Government Center (GC). He said the site of the new GC will be landlocked like the current site. Vetsch responded that the new GC plan includes the potential for another 40 percent in expansion space.

There was discussion about the trend of employees working from home, and how that could affect the space needs of County facilities.

A member of the audience asked about the estimated value of the current GC. Vetsch said the County is researching that information. He thought it may be worth from \$1.5 million to perhaps \$7 million. The cost of demolition must also be considered.

Alan Wilczek, Facilities Services Director, discussed the cost to replace various mechanicals and boilers in the current GC. Vetsch said he did not want to spend a lot of money to replace components and then move to a new building a few years later.

Fred Bonk, Marysville Township: Bonk said he was not opposed to the County spending \$700,000 to tear down the old jail in the current GC. A new building could be built in its place that would accommodate 50-60 employees. He also expressed concerns about traffic congestion at the proposed new site.

Lee Kelly, County Administrator, said the total County debt would be about \$120 million including the proposed new GC building.

Vetsch explained the information on the slide titled, "Bonding, 25-Year Level Debt Service." Discussion ensued regarding the Monticello Nuclear Generating Plant. Vetsch said the plant comprises nine to ten percent of the tax capacity in the County. The State assesses the plant and determines how much they pay in property taxes. Last year the Minnesota Department of Revenue devalued the plant by \$69 million, which lowered their property taxes to the County by about \$1 million. The license for the Monticello plant expires in 2030. Vetsch said the County could maximize the tax revenue from the plant before they close. With the 25-year debt payoff plan, the bond payment would drop \$4 million in 2030 to accommodate the potential loss of income from the Xcel plant. However, recent information has come forward that Xcel may get a ten-year extension on the plant to 2040. Vetsch said the County wants to plan for the worst and hope for the best.

Borrell said he is not in favor of building a new building now. Vetsch said if the County invested money set aside for a future building, the highest return the County could get is 2.85 percent, as riskier investments for a government entity are not allowed. Construction costs may increase at a rate higher than that, and then taxpayers are not served. Pete Filippi from Contegriy Group said construction cost increases of four to five percent are not unusual.

Bonk urged the County Board to keep taxes in check. He favored keeping the current GC building and relocating HHS staff there.

Discussion continued regarding problems at various County buildings. Wilczek discussed solutions that have been implemented.

Uecker said the current GC building is a much better quality than a potential new building. Wilczek said the concrete walls in the building are much more difficult and expensive to rewire and reconfigure for new technology and infrastructure.

Vetsch said a new building will not drive a tax increase. If bids come in too high, the project won't go forward. Uecker said the old jail should be torn down. Vetsch said between the cost of tearing that portion of the old GC

2-20-19 COTW MINUTES (cont.):

down, building a new one on that site, and remodeling the current GC, the cost would be closer to \$40 million. He said at that point it might be better to spend \$49 million for the proposed new GC next to the Justice Center.

Commissioner Chris Husom said the information presented today will be on the County website.

Recommendation: Informational only.

COTW Minutes submitted by Deb Schreiner, Administrative Specialist.

(End of 2-20-19 COTW Minutes)

TIMED ITEMS

PUBLIC HEARING - ORDINANCE AMENDMENT 19-1, AN ORDINANCE ENACTING & ADOPTING THE SUPPLEMENTS TO THE CODE OF ORDINANCES FOR THE COUNTY OF WRIGHT, STATE OF MINNESOTA

At 9:30 A.M., the Public Hearing was opened for Ordinance Amendment #19-1, an Ordinance enacting and adopting the supplements to the Code of Ordinances.

Greg Kryzer, Assistant County Attorney, said the Ordinance Amendment relates to accepting changes that occurred during the codification process by American Legal Publishing Company and includes very minor changes.

Vetsch called for public comment and none was received.

At 9:33 A.M., Borrell moved to close the Public Hearing and comment period for Ordinance Amendment #19-1. The motion was seconded by Daleiden and carried 5-0.

Potter moved to adopt Ordinance Amendment #19-1, an Ordinance enacting and adopting the supplements to the Code of Ordinances for the County of Wright, State of Minnesota. The motion was seconded by Daleiden and carried 5-0.

ORDINANCE AMENDMENT NUMBER 19-1

AN ORDINANCE ENACTING AND ADOPTING THE SUPPLEMENTS TO THE CODE OF ORDINANCES FOR THE COUNTY OF WRIGHT, STATE OF MINNESOTA,

WHEREAS, American Legal Publishing Corporation of Cincinnati, Ohio, has completed a series of supplements to the Code of Ordinances for the County of Wright, which supplements contain all ordinances of a general and permanent nature enacted since the prior codification since codification on July 1, 2016; and

WHEREAS, American Legal Publishing Corporation, to maintain the overall integrity and consistency of the codification process, makes minor stylistic changes to the ordinances as approved by the Board of Commissioners; and

WHEREAS, the Acts of the Legislature of the State of Minnesota empower and authorize the County of Wright to revise, amend, restate, codify and compile any existing ordinances and all new ordinances not heretofore adopted or published and to incorporate such ordinances into one ordinance in book form; and

NOW THEREFORE, THE COUNTY OF WRIGHT HEREBY ORDAINS:

Section 1 That the 2016-2018 supplements to the Code of Ordinances for the County of Wright as submitted by American Legal Publishing Corporation of Cincinnati, Ohio be and the same are hereby adopted by reference as if set out in its entirety.

Section 2 Such Code shall be deemed effective upon approval and publication.

(End of Ordinance Amendment #19-1)

ALICIA O'HARE, WATER RESOURCE SPECIALIST-WRIGHT SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT (SWCD)

Approval Of The 2019 Wright Regional Inspection Program (WRIP)

O'Hare requested approval of the WRIP. The plan has been approved by the SWCD. A PowerPoint presentation was made on the plan and proposed changes:

- Mandatory inspection program
- Off site location
- Decon unit available on site
- Open ½ hour before sunrise to ½ after sunset
- Seal and proof of inspection given
- Can get inspected ahead of time
- Violations could lead to a misdemeanor citation

Changes:

- More lakes proposed
 - East and West Sylvania (86028900)
 - John (86028800)
 - Pleasant (86025100)
 - Moose (86027100)
 - Sugar (86023300)
 - Cedar (86022700)
 - Bass (86023400)
 - Granite (86021700)
 - Maple (86013401 and 86013403)
- Improved inspector training
- Self-Inspection Program
 - Allow users to pass a test and then bypass the inspection site
- Storage Certification
 - Boats stored with LSP for longer than 21 days can be exempt from ordinance
- Spot checks
 - Observe behavior
 - Verify quality
 - Check compliance
 - Exit Inspections

O'Hare said this is a mandatory inspection program as set by the County's ordinance with approval by the DNR (Department of Natural Resources) allowing Wright SWCD as delegated authority to have the program. The inspection station will be located offsite in Annandale, not at the ramps. A decontamination unit will be available onsite. The inspection station will be open from ice out until the end of October. A zip tie seal will be given for all equipment plus a receipt to track compliance at the ramp. Inspections can be done ahead of time. The largest change to the plan is the inclusion of more lakes. The plan includes a full list of ramps potentially in range of the inspection station but will not include all lakes at this time. There will be a total of 16 public and private ramps. Emphasis will be on inspection quality. An inspector coach will be hired. A self-inspection program will be offered allowing users to bypass the inspection station when complying with Statute. Those individuals are still subject to inbound inspections at the ramp. Spot checks will be performed by an authorized inspector to observe behaviors of users, verify the quality of work of inspectors, perform exit inspections, and have discussion with those appearing to be in violation with referrals to inspection stations.

Vetsch said the plan reflects the intent of how the program will be operated in 2019. If approved by the County Board, it will be submitted to the DNR for approval. An ordinance amendment will be required at the County level, to include a public hearing. A 10-30-day comment period can be selected.

Vetsch said if the Plan is not adopted by the County Board today, then the County's ordinance would need to be

repealed and it would end the program entirely. Another possible decision would be to keep the existing program as is and the SWCD Board would decide whether to keep the program intact under those parameters. He noted that even if the County adopts the Plan, the DNR can deny it. Action today is one step of many.

With the Plan, it will include 200 days of inspections at 14 hours/day. The contract for inspectors comes at a cost of \$65,000. Days and hours vary dependent on such things as holidays and expected busy times. Every day there will be an inspector present on one of the nine lakes. There will be a contract with the Sheriff's Office for \$20,000-\$25,000 to supplement enforcement of this program.

Daleiden said some aspects of the plan are good even if the decision is made to stay with the current process. Vetsch said that would pose a problem with the budget because of the lake association contributions. If those lakes are no longer involved, the budget doesn't work as proposed and the sustainability might not be there.

Vetsch said the Board has two options. There has been a lot of public comment at two separate meetings with the result being the proposed plan. He said options would include going forward to repeal the ordinance and accept the plan, or proceed with the current plan. Public hearings may be triggered dependent on the action taken. He restated that even if the Board adopts the WRIP, the DNR could deny it.

O'Hare said her recommendation would be against keeping it to the three lakes. Part of the reason expansion is encouraged is to realize the true benefit of the regional inspection station. Last year, they were able to see the minimum cost and some benefit to the lower use lakes. As more lakes are brought together, they should see more benefit of the regional inspection model and that is what they intend to demonstrate.

Borrell sees the value in the pilot project. What he has asked for and not heard is the future funding source once the Initiative Foundations ceases to fund the program. He suggested one method of funding whereby lakes would form their own LID (lake improvement district) so they have taxing authority. Borrell said the lack of funding source for the future is why he can't support this in the format it is in. Husom said the consensus is that the County is not going to fund this program. The Initiative Foundation will provide funding for years 2019 and 2020. Vetsch hopes that the legislature will find value in the program and choose to appropriate funding. He said larger counties are watching this pilot.

Vetsch said the future of the program is uncertain if the pilot program is ended now. If it fails in 2020, then it failed on its own merit because it did not work but at least the Initiative Foundation funds were fully utilized. While working on the plan, one topic of discussion was the location of the inspection station to users in other areas of the County. A compromise was reached between recreational users and those supporting the program to add self-inspection as an option. That is one of the items that will be watched to see how it plays out. He said better data will be available going into 2020.

Husom said there has been much progress with AIS (Aquatic Invasive Species) discussion. Bringing in the six additional lakes will make it a more efficient and cost-effective system. She appreciates the health inspection training and onsite inspectors.

Husom made a motion to go forward with the ordinance changes and to approve the WRIP. Vetsch asked for a friendly amendment to the motion to include a repeal date of April 15, 2019, meaning that without DNR approval by that date the County will proceed to repeal the ordinance. History has shown the DNR to be slow in response and the program can't operate without that approval. If the DNR does not approve the WRIP, it will give the SWCD an opportunity to pivot their directives on how to utilize inspectors, allocate staff, etc. He said there is not the desire to continue with the current process, so the repeal of the ordinance would move to the pre-2017 model meaning no operation of the WRIP. O'Hare clarified that the DNR has not given the approval to operate the program for the three lakes. Husom thought it may be premature to include the amendment to the motion and suggested addressing it at the time of public comment. Vetsch clarified that the intent would be that if there is no answer from the DNR by April 15th that the ordinance would be repealed. Discussion followed on the importance of partnering with the DNR on this program and AIS efforts in the entire State.

Daleiden said Schroeder Park, a County campground, is located on Cedar Lake which is one of the lakes in the program. That will require inspections for campers. Schroeder Park had 405 campers launch last year. That does not include launches at the DNR controlled access. O'Hare said that the DNR did perform some inspections at the access and had a portable decontamination unit available. That is in addition to staffing by SWCD inspectors.

Discussion returned to the friendly amendment to the motion. Vetsch said the intent would be to receive an answer from the DNR by April 15th. It was stated that the DNR was invited to today's Board meeting but indicated they were unable to attend. It was the consensus that the DNR needs to be involved. Potter said the DNR needs to indicate whether they are on board with the WRIP. Vetsch responded that with the repeal date, the DNR will be required to make a decision on the WRIP.

Vetsch asked for a second on the original motion (to go forward with the ordinance changes and to approve the WRIP) without the friendly amendment for a repeal date. The motion failed for lack of a second.

Borrell said he can't support the WRIP without the DNR support or some other funding source.

Borrell moved to repeal the County ordinance. Vetsch called for a second. The motion failed for lack of a second.

Daleiden moved to table the issue until March 5th to allow the DNR to be present for discussion on the WRIP. The motion was seconded by Borrell.

Vetsch said because of the short time period to implement the WRIP, if the topic is tabled it would be posturing to end the program. With a one-week delay, the public hearing will be held the first week of April and the program would not operate until sometime in May. If the decision is made not to run the WRIP, it will give the contractors and the SWCD time to allocate their resources.

Vetsch called the motion on tabling this topic to the Board meeting of March 5th. The motion died on a 3-1 vote with Borrell, Potter and Vetsch voting against and Husom abstaining.

Doug Flatz, Annandale. Flatz is a retired accountant and said he has been working on this project since the beginning. Referencing sustainability of the WRIP after the grant expires, he offered the suggestion of looking at things such as a reduction in expenses or increasing revenues. He said the easiest method would be to realize increased revenues by adding lakes to the program that are within the 15-mile radius of the inspection station. The second would be to contact State legislators to form funding pools that are sustainable. Reducing expenses would be another option. He referenced 80% labor costs and said part of this had to do with the goal of having the WRIP run efficiently.

Jeff Burns, Monticello. Burns is a SWCD District 2 Supervisor. He encouraged the Board not to delay action and vote in favor of the WRIP. He believes the momentum in this program will create the awareness at the State legislature and in neighboring counties to make a program that is sustainable. Burns referenced the involvement of sports enthusiasts in carrying out this program. The self-inspection program will allow people to be trained and certified. Burns does not want the decision by the Board to be delayed as it will cause problems with implementation dates.

Kathy Jonsrud, Annandale, read a statement on behalf of the Wright Regional Inspection Coalition to support the WRIP and brought forth the following points:

- Inspections for lakes in the program increased 51% compared to 2017
- Wait times were low—average was 30 seconds.
- Sixty-eight inspections failed with sixteen being zebra mussel violations. Violations were identified and corrected before accessing the lake.

Jonsrud said the WRIP as outlined by O'Hare has key enhancements that represent hundreds of meetings and thousands of hours of collaboration over the past year to fine tune and improve the program. The Coalition

asked William Brown, Executive Director of the Michigan Lake Stewardship Association, to attend today's meeting. His scientific background includes scholarly publications and an advanced degree in Natural Resources and Environmental Science. Brown's focus is on AIS and includes a deep, scientific analysis of starry stonewort and its impacts on Michigan waters. Jonsrud said his work and experience is important, with two lakes in Wright County recently infested with starry stonewort, five lakes infested with zebra mussels in the last three years, and two lakes infested with flowering rush.

William Brown, Executive Director of the Michigan Lake Stewardship Association. Brown said Michigan has 83 counties, a state legislature, the DNR, and a DEQ (Department of Environmental Quality). Michigan has about 11,000 lakes with 6,500 of them over than 5 acres. Thousands of the lakes have public accesses which are run by the DNR, the county, or the township.

Brown said in the past 40-50 years, lakes have become an interconnected network for the spread of AIS. The primary culprits are the recreational boating community and the fishing community (those that tow boats between inland lakes). To his knowledge, Michigan counties did not have the discussion about AIS, and he admires that Wright County is talking seriously about protecting inland lakes against AIS.

Brown said every significant lake in Michigan with a public access has 2-3 AIS. Starry stonewort represents an unprecedented threat to our inland eco systems. Lakes in MN, Indiana, Pennsylvania, New York and Minnesota are lakes which can support Starry Stonewort. It grows at explosive rates and prevents fish from spawning and native aquatic plants from growing. It is a species that grows year-round and continues to grow under ice. At this time, Brown said there are between 1,000-2,500 lakes in Michigan that have been invaded by starry stonewort. He compared this to an epidemic and the only way to stop it is to prevent the further spread. The spread is occurring at public access points by boaters not trained or not willing to go through inspections.

Brown said if Michigan had a similar discussion 30 years ago, they wouldn't have this situation. In Michigan, inland lakes support about \$5 billion in the local economy. He is very disappointed in the state agencies that haven't stepped up with greater resources to fight AIS. He said all it takes is one small fragment to infest a lake. It is the most serious threat to inland lakes in history. Brown said he admires the discussion Wright County is having, a discussion that should have taken place in Michigan decades ago.

At 10:30 A.M., Vetsch recessed the County Board Meeting so Commissioners could attend a Ditch Committee Of The Whole Meeting involving a public hearing for County Ditch 14.

At 11:38 A.M., the Board Meeting reconvened.

Joe Schneider, Christmas Lake. Schneider is the President of the MN Coalition of Lake Associations and the President of the Christmas Lake Homeowners Association. He asked the Board to focus on urgency and sustainability. He supported approval of the WRIP and noted the DNR may request adjustments to the plan. Any delays will put this project behind. The goal would be to apply pressure to the DNR to make a decision. Various avenues would be to contact the new DNR Commissioner, or to have the County Attorney reach out to the State as the DNR is precluding the County from acting to protect the lakes. Schneider acknowledged the delays thus far by the DNR and said they have been significant. Schneider viewed the most important thing as sustainability. There are other funding models that can be discussed. He urged Board members to move forward with the WRIP in 2019. A COTW Meeting could be set to discuss alternative funding mechanisms and various ideas being circulated. Schneider offered to participate in that dialogue.

Potter moved to proceed with the WRIP for 2019 to include the changes to the Plan. Vetsch called for a second to the motion, and the motion failed for lack of that second.

Vetsch restated that he will not support a motion without a repeal date due to the associated cost of having the Attorney's Office place pressure on the DNR. A repeal date would require the DNR to take a stance. Husom said she spoke with several individuals who support including a repeal date.

Husom made a motion to accept the WRIP with the repeal date of April 15, 2019. This will include a public comment period. O'Hare said that DNR staff Heidi Wolf and Adam Dahl have a draft of the WRIP. If the motion passes, she will inform the DNR. Potter seconded the motion. He hopes the DNR steps up and takes strides moving forward so the County does not have to invoke the April 15th date.

Vetsch clarified the motion is to accept the WRIP with the 21-day exemption, the self-inspection, the changes to the onsite inspections, having an April 15, 2019 repeal date, as well as other modifications to the WRIP including additional lakes for a total of 9 lakes.

Borrell reiterated that he will not support the WRIP because of the lack of a funding mechanism. Husom said a lot of work has transpired to this point. This program is being watched throughout the State. Borrell said the plan should include all lakes in the 15-mile radius.

Daleiden requested that the motion be called, and it carried 4-1 with Borrell casting the nay vote.

The original motion to accept the WRIP as amended with the repeal date of April 15, 2019 carried 3-2 with Borrell and Daleiden casting the nay votes.

Kryzer said the Board needs to schedule a public hearing date to repeal the ordinance. He said the Board normally has a 30-day notice for the townships. It can be decided whether to waive the 30-day notice and go forward with a 10-day notice per Statute.

Husom moved to set a public hearing for comment on Ordinance 19-2 on 3-19-19 at 10:30 A.M. The motion was seconded by Potter and carried 5-0. Letters previously submitted on this topic are not part of the public record. Any written public input to be included in the public record should be submitted to the Wright County Administration Office prior to 3-19-19. Public comment will be received at the 3-19-19 County Board Meeting.

Marc Mattice, Parks Administrator, asked about how to convey information on this topic to those making reservations at Schroeder Park for the upcoming camping season. It was the consensus that information can be provided to campers noting they can follow the website for information on this possible inspection requirement.

GREAT RIVER REGIONAL LIBRARY (GRRL) CITIZEN REPRESENTATIVE APPOINTMENT

Six applications were received for the open citizen representative position on the GRRL Board. The Board stated that the candidates all had very impressive resumes. The desire of the County Board is to have a representative from the Monticello area as that area has not had an appointment for quite some time, and it more fairly represents the various areas of the County.

Potter moved to appoint Melissa Fee to the GRRL Board as Citizen Representative. The motion was seconded by Daleiden and carried 5-0.

DISCUSSION ON HIRE OF IT DEVELOPER POSITION ABOVE 12% OF MINIMUM HIRE RANGE (LEE KELLY)

Kelly, serving as the Interim IT Director, requested the Board approve the hire of an IT Developer above 12% of the minimum hire range. Daleiden noted this position has been vacant over a year.

Daleiden moved to delegate the authority to Administration to negotiate for the IT Developer position. The motion was seconded by Potter. Vetsch said he supports the request because of how long the position has been vacant. The motion carried 5-0.

ADVISORY COMMITTEE ADVISORY BOARD UPDATES

1. Region 7W Transportation Meeting. Potter said he was elected as Vice Chair. Jurisdictional changes were made including identifying Dague Avenue in Buffalo as a major collector, making it eligible for federal funding.

2. Daleiden said upon the review of the Governor's budget by the House and Senate, the city and county local government aid amounts are being increased to the 2002 amounts. He encouraged residents to contact their local representatives to support this, as a goal not to raise property taxes.
3. Board Room Tours. Kelly said tours of board rooms and A/V will occur on 3-15-19 with BKV Group. Authorization for Board attendance will be placed on an upcoming agenda. Borrell thought a vote should be taken on whether to postpone the proposed Government Center project for 2, 5, or 10 years. He thought the tours should only be scheduled if the idea is to proceed with the project. Daleiden replied there has been enough discussion that reflects three Commissioners want to move ahead to the point of completion of the bid process.

The meeting adjourned at 12:06 P.M.

County Board Minutes Submitted by: Susan Backes, Clerk to the County Board