

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE ST. LOUIS COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

June 8, 2021

Location: Government Services Center, Duluth, Minnesota

Present: Commissioners Jewell, Boyle, Grimm, McDonald, Musolf, Nelson and Chair Jugovich

Absent: None

Convened: Chair Jugovich called the meeting to order at 9:38 a.m.

CONSENT AGENDA

Boyle/Musolf moved to approve the consent agenda. Item #3, Reschedule Location for July 6, August 3, September 7, September 14, and October 5, 2021 County Board Meetings [21-261] was removed from the consent agenda for separate consideration. The motion passed. (7-0)

- Minutes of June 1, 2021
- Community-Based Suicide Prevention Grant "Thrive Range" [21-259]
- Acquisition of Right of Way – Intersection Improvement Project at CSAH 7 and MN Trunk Highway 33 (Industrial Township) [21-260]
- Minnesota State Auditor's 2021 Performance Measurement Program Report [21-262]

Public Works & Transportation Committee

McDonald/Jugovich moved that the St. Louis County Board authorizes a Joint Powers Agreement between the counties of Koochiching, Lake and St. Louis for planning, funding, construction, and management & maintenance of regional motorized trails; and further, that appropriate county officials are hereby authorized to negotiate and execute such Agreement. [21-263]. Commissioner McDonald commented that the Joint Powers Board will help better manage and coordinate ATV trail projects. St. Louis County Administrator Kevin Gray said that the Joint Powers Board will consist of four members, with two representatives of St. Louis County, one representative from Lake County, and one representative from Koochiching County, along with one alternative from each county. St. Louis County Public Works Director Jim Foldesi commented that in the past, ATV clubs have acted independently of each other, which has led to a lack of coordination and prioritization of ATV trail development projects. The Joint Powers Board will create a comprehensive plan for all counties that would help to prioritize projects and ensure projects are completed in a timely manner. After further discussion, the motion passed. (7-0)

Finance & Budget Committee

Nelson/Jugovich moved that the St. Louis County Board approve the 2021 first quarter budget changes. [21-264]. The motion passed. (7-0)

Musolf/Nelson moved that pursuant to the requirements and procedures of Minn. Stat. § 373.01, Subdivision (i), the Chair of the County Board and the County Auditor are authorized to execute and deliver a quit claim deed conveying unimproved nonconforming fee land, parcel 415200-0010-07460, located in Lakewood Township, to Jeremy D. Tinquist and Brianna R. Tinquist for the amount of \$1,620, payable to Fund 100, Agency 128014, Object 583202. The grantee(s) are also responsible for deed tax and recording fees. [21-265]. The motion passed. (7-0)

Nelson/Jugovich moved that the St. Louis County Board designates the priorities for its 2022 Capital Appropriations request as follows: 1. Virginia Regional Landfill Expansion/Improvements, 2. St. Louis County Heritage & Arts Center Life/Safety, HVAC and related improvements, 3. St. Louis County Fair Animal Buildings, and further, that the St. Louis County Board directs the appropriate County staff to submit these priorities to the State of Minnesota as part of the application process. [21-266].

Jewell/Boyle moved to amend the motion to list the Virginia Regional Landfill Expansion/Improvements and the St. Louis County Heritage & Arts Center Life/Safety, HVAC and related improvements as the top priority. Chair Jugovich asked if the Board could list two projects as the top priority. In response, St. Louis County Deputy Administrator Brian Fritsinger said that administration has contacted the state regarding the numbering of projects; however, the state has not provided clarification. According to the process outlined in the application, prioritization of projects is required. Commissioner Grimm commented that the landfill might be a more important issue; however, it makes more budget sense to prioritize funding for the Depot because other funding may be available for the landfill. Commissioner Nelson said that Depot repairs are necessary to preserve the historic building, but the landfill deals with significant public health concerns and should be the Board's top priority. The landfill proposal would treat Per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) and would extend the life of the landfill by 50 to 70 years.

A Point of Personal Privilege was requested at 10:31 a.m. At 10:48 a.m., the Board reconvened with all members present.

Discussion continued regarding 2022 Capital Appropriations priorities. St. Louis County Heritage and Arts Center Director Mary Tennis discussed various building issues. Director Tennis said that the HVAC system needs to be replaced and recently an air handler exploded. In addition, there may be the need for mold abatement and plumbing and electrical upgrades. Commissioner Boyle commented that the only avenue for Depot funding is bonding; whereas, there are potentially other funding options for the landfill including American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding. St. Louis County Intergovernmental Relations Director John Ongaro said that legislative bonding committees use the list to decide what projects they will visit during their fall site visits. Regardless of which project is listed as the top priority, the county will be contacted prior to visits and other projects can be added to the tours. A roll call vote was taken to the amendment, and the amendment failed. (3-4, McDonald, Musolf, Nelson, Jugovich). Commissioner Jewell mentioned that the landfill is an unknown process and it is uncertain if Iron Range communities will support the landfill. Commissioner Grimm commented that it makes fiscal sense to prioritize the projects based on available funding streams. Because of this, the Depot should be listed as the top priority. Commissioner McDonald said that he was confident that the finance committees would visit both the Depot and the landfill. The proposed landfill project is innovative technology and could make St. Louis County a leader in the state. Commissioner Musolf said that he did not support the amendment because it was not viable. He is supportive of listing the landfill as the top priority because the project affects areas countywide. The motion passed. (5-2, Jewell, Grimm).

Central Management & Intergovernmental Committee

Jewell/Boyle moved that the St. Louis County Board will adjust its 2021 Board Meeting schedule to reschedule the following meetings from the Duluth Courthouse to the Duluth Government Services Building: July 6, 2021; August 3, 2021; September 7, 2021; September 14, 2021; October 5, 2021. [21-261]. Deputy Administrator Fritsinger commented that the county is working with the architect to develop design plans to renovate the Duluth Courthouse County Board Room; the plans will be brought to the Board for review. The primary reason for the location change request is to plan for future public hearings. Commissioner Nelson requested that the September 14, 2021 meeting be scheduled at the Virginia Courthouse to coincide with an open house celebration to recognize remodeling at the Virginia Courthouse. Jewell/Boyle amended the motion to change the location of September 14, 2021 meeting to the Virginia Courthouse. Commissioner Boyle commented that the County Board Room needs various upgrades including Information Technology (IT), lighting and sound. After further discussion, the motion passed. (7-0)

COMMISSIONER DISCUSSION ITEMS AND REPORTS

None

At 11:46 a.m., McDonald/Boyle moved to adjourn the Committee of the Whole meeting. The motion passed. (7-0)



Mike Jugovich, Chair of the County Board



Phil Chapman, Clerk of the County Board