

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE ST. LOUIS COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

May 23, 2023

Location: Grand Lake Town Hall, Twig, Minnesota

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

Absent: None

Convened: Chair Boyle called the meeting to order at 10:32 a.m.

CONSENT AGENDA

Musolf/Harala moved to approve the consent agenda. Item #4, Write-off of Bad Debts [23-216] was removed from the consent agenda for separate consideration. The motion passed. (7-0)

- Minutes of May 9, 2023
- Authorization to Contract with Lutheran Social Services (LSS) for Implementation of Local Homeless Prevention Aid Funds [23-213]
- Acceptance of MN DHS Housing and Support and Services Grant to Develop Community Living Infrastructure Funds [23-214]
- Authorization to Apply for the U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Victims of Crime Transforming Grant [23-215]
- Acquisition of Right-of-Way – Replacement of Three Culverts along McQuade Rd (CSAH 33) (Duluth Township) [23-217]
- Premise Permit Application for Lawful Gambling (Floodwood Township) [23-218]
- Abatement List for Board Approval [23-219]
- Renew Joint Powers Agreement with the State of Minnesota [23-220]
- St. Louis River Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan Implementation Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) and Budget [23-221]
- Conveyance of State Tax-Forfeited Land to the City of Virginia [23-222]
- Authorization for Issuance of a Corrective Deed [23-223]
- Request to Apply for Department of Iron Range Resources & Rehabilitation Development Partnership Grant [23-224]

Health & Human Services Committee

Boyle/Nelson moved that the St. Louis County Board approve the write off of five accounts totaling \$126,423.44 in which the collection of required claims have been unsuccessful. [23-216]. Commissioner Nelson commented that the write-off amounts are substantial and if the information is public information, the names should accompany this document. Commissioner Grimm commented that she did not feel the county should be disclosing medical debt information. The motion passed without recommendation. (7-0)

Public Works & Transportation Committee

Musolf/Jugovich moved that the St. Louis County Board authorizes the purchase order for ten pickup trucks from North Country GM of Hibbing, MN, for \$465,620, payable from Fund 407, Agency 407001, Object 666200. [23-225]. County Administrator Kevin Gray commented that purchasing from local vendors is the preferred approach. The motion passed. (7-0)

Central Management & Intergovernmental Committee

Grimm/McDonald moved that the St. Louis County Board appoints the following individuals to serve as the Special Board of Appeal and Equalization for Assessment Year 2023: District 1 - John Vigen, Duluth; District 2 - Nathanael DeLoach, Duluth; District 3 - Sherri Puckett, Duluth; District 4 - Leonard Cersine, Ely; District 5 - Tim Peterson, Hermantown; District 6 - Dawn Cole, Town of Fayal; District 7 - Frank Bigelow, Hibbing; and further, that the Special Board of Appeal and Equalization is: delegated all powers and duties of the County Board of Appeal and Equalization; to report the results of their deliberations back to the St. Louis County Board in the form of minutes kept by the Clerk of the County Board; directed to hold at least one meeting day in Duluth, and one day in Virginia, Minnesota; to be compensated at the rate of \$300 per meeting day, payable from Assessor's Department Fund 100, Agency 118001, Object #635300 - Non-employee fees and be reimbursed for mileage and expenses at the current CONUS rate from Assessor's Department Object #635500 - Non-employee travel; and directed to convene at 10:00 a.m., June 19, 2023, in Duluth, MN. [23-226]. The motion passed. (7-0)

Finance & Budget Committee

Nelson/Musolf moved authorize an agreement to accept the proposal for the purchase the materials and building erection supervision for the Culver, Kugler, and Whiteface salt and sand domes and cold-storage buildings from Greystone Construction for the price of \$1,066,327.12. [23-227]. The motion passed. (7-0)

COMMISSIONER DISCUSSION ITEMS AND REPORTS

Chair Boyle said he was proud of the County Board and County Administration for a successful 2023 legislative session. County legislative priorities passed by the legislature included increases to county aid, Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILT), Northern Lights Express (NLX), Veterans benefits, Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD), Per- and Polyfluorinated Substances (PFAS), and funding for the Clarity project.

Commissioner Harala commented that with the shift in the county's economic development leader, business leaders have reached out to her stressing the importance of having qualities such as a deep attention to detail, stalwart communications, and be willing to write an economic development plan that partners with agencies and organizations in the community.

Commissioner McDonald said that St. Louis County legislative success was due to the County Commissioners being at the capital in front of legislators, pushing projects. Legislators not affiliated with St. Louis County commented that it was refreshing to see St. Louis County Commissioners at the capital, and that they wished their commissioners were at the capital pushing projects.

Commissioner Nelson commented that the Northern Lights Express (NLX) high speed rail will be transformative to our area.

At 10:53 a.m., Commissioner Grimm, supported by Commissioner Nelson, moved to adjourn the Committee of the Whole meeting. The motion passed. (7-0)



Patrick Boyle, Chair of the County Board



Phil Chapman, Clerk of the County Board