

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE ST. LOUIS COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

July 25, 2023

Location: Proctor City Hall, Proctor, Minnesota

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

Absent: Commissioners Grimm and McDonald

Convened: Chair Boyle called the meeting to order at 10:06 a.m.

CONSENT AGENDA

Nelson/Musolf moved to approve the consent agenda. Item #4, State Contract Purchase of Nine All-Wheel Drive SUVs [23-296], Item #9, Permission to Enter into Negotiations for Tenant Lease Agreements at The Depot [23-301], and Item #15, Final Plat Approval of Maple Shores, Sections 10 and 15, Township 52N, Range 15W (Fredenberg) [23-307] were removed from the consent agenda for separate consideration. The motion passed. (5-0, Grimm, McDonald absent)

- Minutes of July 11, 2023
- Duluth Farm to School Program [23-293]
- Appoint Members to Local Mental Health Advisory Council [23-294]
- Acceptance of Public Health Infrastructure Grants [23-295]
- Amendment 1: 2023 Liquid Surface Treatment (Calcium Chloride/ Magnesium Chloride) [23-297]
- Apply for Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Promoting Resilient Operations for Transformative, Efficient, and Cost-Savings Transportation (PROTECT) Discretionary Program grant opportunity for CSAH 61 Reinforced Soil Slope Project (CP 0061-726178) [23-298]
- Apply for Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) grant for Woodland Avenue Green Infrastructure Project (CP 0009-689681) [23-299]
- Accept Additional Federal Funds from the Department of the Army for CP 0009-689681 (“Tischer Creek Project”) [23-300]
- Abatement List for Board Approval [23-302]
- Engineering Services for the Reconstruction of the Green Lot – Downtown Duluth [23-303]
- State Contract Purchase of Four Fleet Pickup Trucks [23-304]
- Food Services Contract for the Hibbing and Virginia Lockup Facilities [23-305]
- Approval of Registered Land Survey No. 152 [23-306]
- Authorization to Apply for and Accept FY2024 MPCA SSTS Base Grant and SSTS Low-Income Fix-Up Grant [23-308]
- Non-Exclusive Right-of-Way Lease Across County Fee Land and Tax-Forfeit Land to Bruce Kainz and Mark Larson (Breitung and Eagles Nest Twps 62-14) [23-309]
- Acceptance of Iron Range Resources & Rehabilitation Residential Redevelopment Program Grant [23-310]
- Acceptance of Iron Range Resources & Rehabilitation Development Partnership Grant [23-311]

Finance & Budget Committee

Nelson/Boyle moved that the St. Louis County Board authorizes Depot appropriate County staff to negotiate and enter into leases for space within The Depot consistent with the recommendations of the Selection Team as follows:

- Depot Foundation: permission to negotiate and enter lease for current spaces;
- Duluth Art Institute: proposal rejected;
- Lake Superior Railroad Museum: permission to negotiate and enter lease for 43,201 square feet of space, consistent with current lease, with additional areas being used by LSRM not subject to current lease being added;
- Minnesota Ballet: permission to negotiate and enter lease for current spaces and the theatre box office;
- Duluth Superior Symphony Association: permission to negotiate and enter lease for current spaces;
- St. Louis County Historical Society: permission to negotiate and enter lease for current spaces;

and further, authorizes the Depot Operations Committee to implement competitive bidding processes as needed in the future. [23-301]. St. Louis County Deputy Administrator Brian Fritsinger provided the Board with a brief overview of the proposals and noted that minimum lease rates were established to help cover Depot operating costs; however, the Depot is still receiving significant public subsidies for operation. Christina Woods, Executive Director of the Duluth Art Institute, claimed that their organization was not the only organization that offered a reduced rate; however, they were the only organization that was rejected. Ms. Woods said that the Duluth Art Institute has worked with organizations in the Great Hall regarding the safety and security of artwork, which includes the installation of security cameras, protocols of how spaces are set up, and methods to let people to know if the gallery is open or closed. Robin Washington, Board President of the Duluth Art Institute, said the organization acknowledged the minimum rate at the time of the proposal; however, they would not agree to an amount that was to be negotiated. Mr. Washington commented that state statute exempts the organization because they pay less than \$15,000 annually in lease fees. After further discussion, the motion passed without recommendation. (5-0, Grimm, McDonald absent)

Harala/Jugovich moved that the St. Louis County Board approves the use of up to \$20,000 of American Rescue Plan Act Revenue Loss funding for the Breitung Township Recreation and Culture Improvement Project; that Breitung Township shall comply and submit all necessary information, documentation and reporting materials required by the County to ensure that the project meets any and all conditions as required under the program; and further, that appropriate County officials are authorized to enter into an agreement with the township for this project with funds for the above project payable from Fund 239, American Rescue Plan Action Revenue Loss. [23-312]. The motion passed. (5-0, Grimm, McDonald absent)

Boyle/Harala moved that the St. Louis County Board approves the use of up to \$347,550 of American Rescue Act Plan Revenue Loss funds for the remodel of the first floor of the Duluth Government Services Center; that the St. Louis County Board awards the project to the low bidder and authorizes the appropriate county officials to enter into an agreement with Gardner Builders, LLC of Duluth, MN, to provide all construction services related the remodeling of room 104 in the Duluth Government Services Center for the lump sum of \$347,550; and further, that all construction and renovations shall be in compliance with local zoning regulations, state building code and accomplished using St. Louis County purchasing rules.

The project shall be payable from Fund 239, American Rescue Plan Act Revenue Loss. [23-313]. Deputy Administrator Fritsinger said the initial estimate for the project was \$750,00 and noted that the low bid was \$347,550. St. Louis County Public Health and Human Services Director Linnea Mirsch said the Government Services Building is an old building and the remodel will enhance clinical services by making the area more open and welcoming. Director Mirsch noted that the bid includes office furniture. After further discussion, the motion passed. (5-0, Grimm, McDonald absent)

Environment & Natural Resources Committee

Jugovich/Boyle moved that the St. Louis County Board grants final approval to the plat of Maple Shores, Sections 10 and 15, Township 52N, Range 15W (Fredenberg). [23-307]. Mike Roberts, of Duluth, provided the Board with a handout and said that he and his wife have a lease agreement that is in effect until 2041. Mr. Roberts commented that the proposed plat will allow Minnesota Power to take a portion of his property for a shared access road and a cul-de-sac; this action violates his lease contract and state statute. Mr. Roberts requested that the Board table the proposed plat until at least July 28, 2023. St. Louis County Assistant County Attorney Chris Pinkert commented that from the County Attorney's Office's perspective, this is a private lease matter. After further discussion, the motion passed without recommendation for consideration at the August 8, 2023 Board meeting. (5-0, Grimm, McDonald absent)

Chair Boyle temporarily exited the meeting from 10:57 a.m. to 10:58 a.m.

Central Management Committee

Harala/Nelson moved that the 2023-2025 Deputy Sheriff Unit contract is ratified, and county officials are authorized to execute the Collective Bargaining Unit Agreement. [23-314]. St. Louis County Director of Human Resources and Administration Jim Gottschald provided the Board with an overview of the agreement. Director Gottschald commented that the agreement includes a Memo of Understanding that will allow lateral hires to receive service credit towards initial step placement and progression through the salary range. The motion passed. (5-0, Grimm, McDonald absent)

Public Works & Transportation Committee

Musolf/Nelson moved that the St. Louis County Board authorizes the purchase of nine (9) SUVs from North Country GM of Hibbing, MN, for \$268,993.71. [23-296]. Commissioner Musolf commented that County Administration has asked that the resolution be passed without recommendation to allow for clerical review. The motion passed without recommendation. (5-0, Grimm, McDonald absent)

Commissioner Musolf temporarily exited the meeting from 11:09 a.m. to 11:11 a.m.

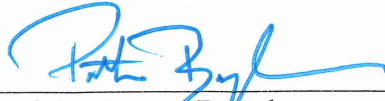
COMMISSIONER DISCUSSION ITEMS AND REPORTS

Commissioner Jugovich said the St. Louis County Fair – “The Five Best Days of Summer” will be held in Chisholm starting on August 2, 2023. Commissioner Nelson noted that there will be a ribbon cutting ceremony for the new rabbit and poultry building.

Commissioner Harala said that Sheriff Ramsay has committed to staff the Environmental Sheriff position on an ongoing basis.

Chair Boyle said last week the Board held budget meetings and commended the work of Brian Fritsinger, BreAnn Graber, and Angie Patullo.

At 11:13 a.m., Harala/Jugovich moved to adjourn the Committee of the Whole meeting. The motion passed. (5-0, Grimm, McDonald absent)



Patrick Boyle, Chair of the County Board



Phil Chapman, Clerk of the County Board