

REGULAR SESSION OF THE MOWER COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

January 23, 2024

The Mower County Board of Commissioners in and for the County of Mower, Minnesota, met in Regular Session January 23, 2024 at 9:00 a.m. at the Government Center in Austin, Minnesota.

All members present, viz: Chair John Mueller, Vice-Chair Polly Glynn, Mike Ankeny, Dan Sparks and Jerry Reinartz. Also in attendance were County Attorney Kristen Nelsen, County Administrator Trish Harren Gjersvik, Executive Assistant Denise Barthels, and Austin Daily Herald Editor Eric Johnson.

The meeting was opened with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Motion made by Commissioner Glynn, seconded by Commissioner Ankeny, to approve the agenda adding 1) motion to write-off Health & Human Services and Public Health uncollectible accounts receivable and deleting 1) general business Item #5 December Manual Warrants and 2) Public Works Item #1 Resolution for SAP 50-599-184 State Grant Agreement. Motion carried.

Motion made by Commissioner Glynn, seconded by Commissioner Sparks, to approve the consent agenda as presented:

1. Approve Minutes of January 9, 2024

Motion carried.

County Administrator Trish Harren Gjersvik provided the Board with a department update which included a status update of the Strategic Planning Process. The County Mission Statement is to Deliver Quality Services for the People We Serve. Its Vision is for Vibrant communities where all people thrive. Its Motto: Many voices – One Future. The county developed strategic imperatives around four focus points including fiscal responsibility, people, customer, and processes. Each department has developed strategic imperatives and goals in alignment with the county's strategic imperatives. Part of the strategic planning process under the people category is periodic employee engagement surveys. Employee engagement has been surveyed four times and has increased in all eight areas of measurement. The internal focus for 2024 is to intentionally invest in technology, process improvement, election administration, county safety program, communications, and to once again win the Great Place to Work award. The external focus areas for 2024 are to continue to build community partnerships to address community issues including supporting business and growing the economic footprint, broadband access, food security, housing, mental health, and childcare.

The Board recessed at 9:33 a.m. for a public hearing.

The Chair called the Public Hearing to order at 9:34 a.m. regarding a Housing Tax Abatement Application of Chans & Holly Meyer for a single-family home located Block 2, Lot 2 Boe Subdivision, Adams, MN (PIN 21.016.0080).

County Administrator Trish Harren reviewed the application and recommended approval.

The applicant was not present. No one else spoke for or against the Chans & Holly Meyer housing tax abatement application.

The Chair closed the Public Hearing at 9:35 a.m. regarding the Chans & Holly Meyer Housing Tax Abatement application.

The Chair called the Public Hearing to order at 9:35 a.m. regarding a Housing Tax Abatement Application of Bigelow & Lennon for a single-family home located Lot 14, Block 1 Nature Ridge Third, Austin, MN (PIN 34.468.0140).

County Administrator Trish Harren reviewed the application and recommended approval.

The applicant Bigelow & Lennon Construction was not present. No one else spoke for or against the Bigelow & Lennon Construction housing tax abatement application.

The Chair closed the Public Hearing at 9:36 a.m. regarding the Bigelow & Lennon Construction Housing Tax Abatement application.

The County Board reconvened its regular session at 9:36 a.m.

Date: January 23, 2024

Res. #11-24

**RESOLUTION APPROVING TAX ABATEMENT
FOR CERTAIN PROPERTY PURSUANT TO MINN. STAT. 469.1813**

On motion of Commissioner Glynn, seconded by Commissioner Reinartz, the following Resolution was passed and adopted by the Mower County Board of Commissioners at a meeting held January 23, 2024 at the Government Center, Austin, Minnesota.

WHEREAS, Minnesota Statute 469.1813 gives authority to the County of Mower to grant an abatement of property taxes imposed by the County if certain criteria are met; and

WHEREAS, in addition to the statutory requirements, Mower County has adopted the Tax Abatement Policy for new construction of Single and Multi-family homes which includes criteria which must be met before an abatement of taxes will be granted; and

WHEREAS, Chans and Holly Meyer are the owners of certain property within Mower County, legally described as follows:

Block 2, Lot 2 Boe Subdivision, Adams, MN (PIN 21.016.0080)

WHEREAS, Chans and Holly Meyer have made application to Mower County for the abatement of taxes as to the above-described parcel; and

WHEREAS, Notice having been duly given, a public hearing was held on January 23, 2024 before the Mower County Board of Commissioners, on said application.

WHEREAS, Chans and Holly Meyer have met the statutory requirements outlined under Minnesota Statute 469.1813 Subdivision 1(1) and Subdivision 2(i) as well as Mower County's criteria for tax abatement;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF MOWER COUNTY, MINNESOTA:

1. Mower County does, hereby grant an abatement of Mower County's share of real estate taxes upon the above-described parcel for the construction of the single-family home.
2. The tax abatement will be for no more than five years commencing, in the tax year the property realizes a value increase over original value due to construction of the housing project. Partially constructed housing may result in an abatement in the first abatement year that may be significantly less than the following years. This will still be considered one of the five years of eligible abatement. In the event construction has not commenced within one year of approval, the abatement is eliminated and the property owner will need to reapply in accordance with this policy.
3. The County shall provide the awarded abatement payment following payment of due real estate taxes annually. One single payment shall be made to the owner of record at the time of the payment, by December 30th of that calendar year.
4. The real estate taxes to be abated shall be for up to the full amount of the real estate taxes collected due to the added tax base of the newly constructed housing/home annually. The current value of the property is not eligible for the abatement, will not be abated as part of this program and is further defined as the "original value." Any eligible abatement years are calculated on the tax increase due to a value increase over the original value.

Passed and approved this 23rd day of January, 2024.

Date: January 23, 2024

Res. #12-24

**RESOLUTION APPROVING TAX ABATEMENT
FOR CERTAIN PROPERTY PURSUANT TO MINN. STAT. 469.1813**

On motion of Commissioner Ankeny, seconded by Commissioner Sparks, the following Resolution was passed and adopted by the Mower County Board of Commissioners at a meeting held January 23, 2024 at the Government Center, Austin, Minnesota.

WHEREAS, Minnesota Statute 469.1813 gives authority to the County of Mower to grant an abatement of property taxes imposed by the County if certain criteria are met; and

WHEREAS, in addition to the statutory requirements, Mower County has adopted the Tax Abatement Policy for new construction of Single and Multi-family homes which includes criteria which must be met before an abatement of taxes will be granted; and

WHEREAS, Nature Ridge Properties of Austin, Co. (Seller) is the owner of certain property within Mower County, legally described as follows:

Lot 14, Block 1 Nature Ridge Third, Austin, MN (PIN 34.468.0140)

WHEREAS, Bigelow & Lennon Construction (Buyer) has made application to Mower County for the abatement of taxes as to the above-described parcel; and

WHEREAS, Notice having been duly given, a public hearing was held on January 23, 2024 before the Mower County Board of Commissioners, on said application.

WHEREAS, Nature Ridge Properties of Austin, Co. (Seller) and Bigelow & Lennon Construction (Buyer) have met the statutory requirements outlined under Minnesota Statute 469.1813 Subdivision 1(1) and Subdivision 2(i) as well as Mower County's criteria for tax abatement;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF MOWER COUNTY, MINNESOTA:

1. Mower County does, hereby grant an abatement of Mower County's share of real estate taxes upon the above-described parcel for the construction of the single-family home.
2. The tax abatement will be for no more than five years commencing, in the tax year the property realizes a value increase over original value due to construction of the housing project. Partially constructed housing may result in an abatement in the first abatement year that may be significantly less than the following years. This will still be considered one of the five years of eligible abatement. In the event construction has not commenced within one year of approval, the abatement is eliminated and the property owner will need to reapply in accordance with this policy.
3. The County shall provide the awarded abatement payment following payment of due real estate taxes annually. One single payment shall be made to the owner of record at the time of the payment, by December 30th of that calendar year.
4. The real estate taxes to be abated shall be for up to the full amount of the real estate taxes collected due to the added tax base of the newly constructed housing/home annually. The current value of the property is not eligible for the abatement, will not be abated as part of this program and is further defined as the "original value." Any eligible abatement years are calculated on the tax increase due to a value increase over the original value.

Passed and approved this 23rd day of January 2024.

Motion made by Commissioner Ankeny, seconded by Commissioner Glynn, to approve the Health & Human Services accounts payable totaling \$193,237.28. Motion carried.

Motion made by Commissioner Ankeny, seconded by Commissioner Glynn, to write-off \$47,134.84 in uncollectable Health & Human Services and \$1,740.00 in Public Health accounts receivables. Motion carried.

Motion made by Commissioner Reinartz, seconded by Commissioner Sparks, to approve the following Commissioner warrants for payment:

<u>Vendor Name</u>	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Vendor Name</u>	<u>Amount</u>
180 Degrees, Inc.	3,316.14	Leadership Development Resources	3,375.00
Advanced Correctional Healthcare, Inc	46,243.61	Mayo Clinic	3,828.00
Association Of Minnesota Counties	6,278.00	Mayo Clinic -Rochester	66,104.52
Baudoin Oil Company	17,118.44	MCHS SE Minnesota	10,074.70
Bauer Built Tire	12,377.22	Minnesota Counties Computer Cooperative	18,739.24
CDW Government	10,310.29	NetMotion Software, Inc	5,146.32
Cedar Valley Services, Inc	55,904.18	Petroblend Corp.	2,476.68
Central States Wire Prod	3,758.00	Pomp's Tire Service, Inc	2,028.36
City Of Austin	8,970.72	Prairie Lakes Youth Programs Secure	9,375.00
CivicPlus, LLC	2,594.00	Pro-West & Associates, Inc.	10,887.76
Consolidated Correctional Foodservice	19,515.14	SEMREX	2,475.00
Dave Lucas Consulting	3,850.00	Skyline Salt Solutions	38,206.57
Dell Marketing L P	3,730.45	Uhl Company Inc	8,752.73
Department Of Corrections	33,800.00	Village Ranch Inc	16,294.53
Freeborn County Co-Operative Oil Co.	9,544.15	Workshop Software, Inc.	3,825.00
Gallagher Benefit Services Inc	4,000.00	Ziegler, Inc	7,006.82
Healthiest You	6,750.00	77 Payments less than 2000	38,115.11
		Final Total:	494,771.68

Motion carried.

Motion made by Commissioner Glynn, seconded by Commissioner Reinartz, to approve the Contract for Radiologic Consulting for Professional Services to assist with the purchase and installation of low-dose, full-body security scanners for the jail. Contract effective upon signing through December 31, 2024, and costs not to exceed \$5,000. Motion carried.

Motion made by Commissioner Glynn, seconded by Commissioner Ankeny, to authorize the termination of the postage meter lease agreement MailFinance effective March 31, 2024. Motion carried.

Motion made by Commissioner Glynn, seconded by Commissioner Reinartz, to approve the purchase of a Pitney Bowes MailCenter 2000 postage meter with software maintenance agreement (\$11,028.45) and authorize the chair to sign the corresponding State of Minnesota State Procurement contract for the purchase. Motion carried.

Lake Louise Park Manager Bob Storlie requested the Board consider a letter of support for the acquisition of real estate adjacent to the park and a proposed statutory boundary change at the park by the State. Mr. Storlie also reviewed park and visitor statistics.

Motion made by Commissioner Ankeny, seconded by Commissioner Glynn, to approve the letter of support for the potential land acquisition of real estate and proposed statutory boundary change at Lake Louise State Park near LeRoy, MN. Motion carried.

Motion made by Commissioner Ankeny, seconded by Commissioner Reinartz, to authorize the Board Chair to sign the 2024 Annual Recertification for FEMA's CRS (Community Rating System) Program. Motion carried.

Motion made by Commissioner Sparks, seconded by Commissioner Glynn, to declare Public Work's Cannon Plotter (item #0909) as surplus property for disposal. Motion carried.

Motion made by Commissioner Glynn, seconded by Commissioner Ankeny, to approve the purchase of a new Toyota Model 8FBE20U forklift for the recycling center accepting the low quote of Atlas Toyota (\$40,771.34). Motion carried.

Motion made by Commissioner Glynn, seconded by Commissioner Sparks, to approve annual solid waste hauler licenses effective 2/1/24-1/31/25 for the following:

Thompson Sanitation Inc	REDCAN, LLC
Freeborn County Cooperative Oil Co.	Ace Solid Waste Inc (pending payment)
Harter's Disposal of MN, LLC	Skjeveland Enterprises
Bustad Dozing & Excavating Inc.	Jim's Excavation, LLC (pending payment and Bond)
Veit Container Corp	Kruckeberg Fleet Services
HANSEN HAULING & EXCAVATING INC	Waste Management of Minnesota Inc.
LRS of Minnesota, LLC	

Motion carried.

Finance Manager Loni Swenson provided the Board with the 4th Quarter 2023 Financial Update and the 4th Quarter 2023 Investment Report.

Motion made by Commissioner Glynn, seconded by Commissioner Ankeny, to acknowledge receipt of the 4th quarter 2023 investment report. Motion carried.

Motion made by Commissioner Glynn, seconded by Commissioner Ankeny, to amend the Budget Policy as follows:

Budget Policy

It is the position of Mower County to present anticipated revenues, expenditures, and appropriations of all funds in a formal budget that is approved by the County Board. Departments are responsible for submitting proposed departmental budgets to the County Administrator upon request. Local and area agencies need to direct their annual request of funds to the County Administrator.

Revenues may constitute governmental income, donations, or charges for services. Fee schedules for charges for services must be prior board approved. Donations or grant funds must be prior board approved for acceptance. Expenditures must be for a "public purpose" that will "serve as a benefit to the community as a body and which, at the same time, is directly related to the functions of government." *Visina v. Freeman*, 89 N.W.2d 635(1958)

The Mower County Board shall review all budget requests and adopt an annual budget. The **Finance Manager** ~~County Administrator~~ shall communicate and post the final budget data. County departments and agencies are required to manage within their budgets. Decrease in revenue should also translate into a decrease in expenditures. An increase in revenue does not automatically translate into an increase in expenditures. ~~unless a~~

~~budget amendment form is approved.~~ Departments cannot exceed any portion of their approved expenditure budget without approval as follows:

- 1) The County Administrator shall be authorized to approve non-personnel departmental expenditure budget changes under \$10,000 per occurrence, with a total annual maximum of \$50,000. The ~~Administrator~~ **Finance Manager** shall provide the Mower County Board with a quarterly **financial** update of ~~the~~ budget changes.
- 2) All other budget changes shall require approval by the County Board.
- 3) ~~Requests for budget changes shall be submitted for approval using the Budget Amendment Form.~~

Motion carried.

Motion made by Commissioner Ankeny, seconded by Commissioner Reinartz to delete Personnel Policy H110 Mower County Budget Purchasing Policy (*obsolete*). Motion carried.

Motion made by Commissioner Glynn, seconded by Commissioner Sparks, to adopt the Procurement Policy with check list effective January 23, 2024. The entire policy is on file in County Administration and Finance. Motion carried.

Motion made by Commissioner Glynn, seconded by Commissioner Reinartz, to authorize the Board Chair, County Administrator, Public Works Director and Assistant Public Works Director (E.S.) sign and submit the comment letter prepared by Public Works on the Dodge County Wind Transmission Line Route to the Public Utilities Commission. Motion carried.

Motion made by Commissioner Ankeny, seconded by Commissioner Reinartz, to approve the addition of a 1.0 FTE to the IT Department to assist with the high volume of support needed for the Health & Human Services Department and the needs within the IT Department with foundational upgrades. Motion carried.

Motion made by Commissioner Glynn, seconded by Commissioner Sparks, to approve the utilization of the Phased Retirement Option with authorization. Motion carried.

Motion made by Commissioner Glynn, seconded by Commissioner Sparks, to amend Personnel Policy D113 PERA Phased Retirement Option by amending the selected paragraphs of the policy to change the approving authority from the County Board to the County Administrator as follows:

Under the Policy Statement Section the following paragraphs are amended as follows:

*Mower County recognizes that there may be benefits in retaining experienced employees, such as mentoring new and/or existing employees and enhancing organizational efficiencies. In cases where ~~the Mower County Administrator~~ determines, ~~through recommendation from~~ with a notice to the Personnel Committee, that there is a valid business purpose, the County ~~Board~~ **Administrator** ~~will~~ **may** offer the Phased Retirement Option with terms and conditions of employment specific to each individual agreement.*

***The Mower County Administrator** retains sole discretion in offering the Phased Retirement Option to an employee. Thus, nothing in this policy shall be construed as a guarantee of this option or a contract of employment.*

COMMISSIONERS' RECORD MOWER COUNTY, MINNESOTA

In accordance with governing legislation, the Phased Retirement Option must not exceed one year, but may be renewed for periods up to a year for a total not to exceed five years. The renewal of a Phased Retirement agreement is at the sole discretion of ~~the~~ Mower County ~~Administrator~~. ~~The option to enter into a new PRO agreement with an employee sunsets on June 30, 2014 and would require additional legislation to extend beyond that date.~~

Under the Eligibility Section the last sentence in the section is amended as follows:

In addition to the PERA requirements, Mower County requests that interested, eligible employees submit a written request to their department head indicating their interest in entering into a PRO agreement. The Department Head shall review the request and provide a recommendation to the Human Resources Director who will provide the information to the Personnel Committee ~~County~~ ~~Administrator~~ for further consideration.

Under the Employment Terms and Conditions Section the first sentence in the section is amended as follows:

Upon the County Board's ~~Administrator's~~ approval of a PRO request, an individual agreement that details the terms...

Motion carried.

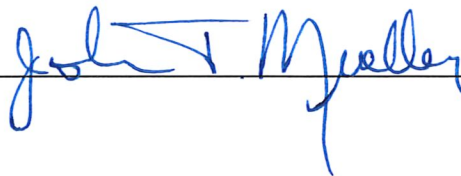
Under Committee Reports Commissioner Glynn reported she attended the Soil & Water Conservation District meeting on 1/10 and Finance Committee on 1/16. Commissioner Mueller reported he and Commissioner Reinartz attended a Personnel Committee meeting on 1/9 and participated on the interview panel for Deputy County Administrator on 1/18 and 1/19. Commissioner Sparks reported he attended a clean water council meeting on 1/19 and attended the Rural Mn Counties meeting via Zoom on 1/22. Commissioner Reinartz confirmed his attendance as reference by Commissioner Mueller for personnel related meetings. Commissioner Ankeny reported he attended a Finance Committee meeting on 1/16.

County Administrator Trish Harren Gjersvik provided a Sterling Park fencing project update. A meeting was held to address neighbors' questions and concerns. In addition, Ms. Gjersvik reported that a meeting was held with SEMCAC regarding their bonding request and the possibility of adding a space for childcare services for possible additional funding options.

The Chair adjourned the meeting at 11:09 a.m. The next meeting is a work session scheduled for February 6, 2024, at 1:00 p.m.

THE MOWER COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

BY: _____



Chairperson

Attest:

By: Trish Harren Gjersvik
Clerk/Administrator