

REGULAR SESSION OF THE MOWER COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

December 30, 2024

The Mower County Board of Commissioners in and for the County of Mower, Minnesota, met in Regular Session December 30, 2024 at 9:00 a.m. at the Government Center in Austin, Minnesota.

All members present, viz: Chair John Mueller (9:28 a.m.), Vice-Chair Polly Glynn, Mike Ankeny, Dan Sparks and Jerry Reinartz. Also, in attendance County Administrator Trish Harren Gjersvik.

The meeting was opened with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Motion made by Commissioner Sparks, seconded by Commissioner Sparks, to approve the agenda. Motion carried.

Human Resources Director Kristina Kohn provided a department update that was an overview of 2024 in which the department rolled out with Health & Human Services the new performance management system, exited the Minnesota Merit System giving more flexibility in hiring, transferring and promoting employees for Health & Human Services positions, saw an increase in diversity in positions that reflects more of the population of Mower County, reviewed one-third of job classifications and no adjustments were needed, and increased communication and teamwork among departments such as Finance. Hiring statistics were shared indicating that 58 people were hired and 19 people were promoted or transferred to other positions. In 2025 the department, among other things it plans to expand the performance management system to other departments and work on reviewing and updating as necessary one-third of the personnel policies.

The Board recessed at 9:31 a.m. for the purpose of a public hearing.

The Chair called the Public Hearing to order at 9:31 a.m. regarding a Housing Tax Abatement application of Wyatt Richardson for a single-family home located at Sec18 Twp103 R16 S415FT E565FT E½ SE¼ Dexter Twp MN (PIN 05.018.0040)

County Administrator Trish Harren Gjersvik reviewed the application and recommended approval.

The Applicant was not present. No one spoke for or against the Richardson housing tax abatement application.

The Chair closed the Public Hearing at 9:34 a.m. regarding the Wyatt Richardson Housing Tax Abatement application.

The Chair called the Public Hearing to order at 9:34 a.m. regarding a Housing Tax Abatement application of Brian Kasel for a single-family home located at Sec06 Twp103 R17 4.3 AC NW1/4 NW1/4 N OF CREEK Red Rock Twp MN (PIN 16.006.0080)

County Administrator Trish Harren Gjersvik reviewed the application and recommended approval. This project includes new construction addition and renovation of existing home that was lived in only by the previous owners.

The Applicant Brian Kasel was present remotely and spoke on his own behalf. No one else spoke for or against the Kasel housing tax abatement application.

The Chair closed the Public Hearing at 9:40 a.m. regarding the Brian Kasel Housing Tax Abatement application.

The County Board reconvened its regular session at 9:40 a.m.

Date: December 30, 2024

Res. #109-24

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

On motion of Commissioner Glynn, seconded by Commissioner Sparks, the following Resolution was passed and adopted by the Mower County Board of Commissioners at a meeting held December 30, 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, Wyatt Richardson is the owner(s) of certain property within Mower County, legally described as follows:

Sec18 Twp103 R16 S415FT E565FT E½ SE¼ Dexter Twp MN (PIN 05.018.0040)

WHEREAS, Wyatt Richardson 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 December 30, 2024 before the Mower County Board of Commissioners, on said application.

WHEREAS, Wyatt Richardson has 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 30th day of December, 2024.

The Board discussed the housing tax abatement application of Mr. Brian Kasel concerning whether or not the remodel and addition to an existing home meets the intent of the housing tax abatement policy.

Date: December 30, 2024

Res. #110-24

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

On motion of Commissioner Ankeny, seconded by Commissioner Glynn, the following Resolution was passed and adopted by the Mower County Board of Commissioners at a meeting held December 30, 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, Brian Kasel is the owner(s) of certain property within Mower County, legally described as follows:

Sec06 Twp103 R17 4.3 AC NW1/4 NW1/4 N OF CREEK Red Rock Twp MN (PIN 16.006.0080)

WHEREAS, Brian Kasel 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 December 30, 2024 before the Mower County Board of Commissioners, on said application.

WHEREAS, Brian Kasel has 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 30th day of December, 2024 with a vote of 3 – 2. The Commissioners voted as follows: Commissioner Ankeny aye; Commissioner Reinartz nay; Commissioner Sparks aye; Commissioner Glynn aye; Commissioner Mueller nay.

The Board instructed that staff review the housing tax abatement policy for possible revision to be more specific on housing projects that qualify for an abatement.

Motion made by Commissioner Glynn, seconded by Commissioner Sparks, to approve the agreement with Savi for student loan assistance program effective December 31, 2024 through December 31, 2026 subject to review and approval of the County Attorney. Motion carried.

Motion made by Commissioner Glynn, seconded by Commissioner Ankeny, to maintain the use of Policy B130, Recruitment and Selection, and to approve the annual staffing levels for 2025 for all departments as on file in Human Resources and summarized as follows:

Department	Qty	Department	Qty
Administration	4	GIS	4
Attorney	14.8	Health & Human Services	108.8
Bldg. Maintenance	5	Highway	30.5
Commissioners	5	Human Resources	4
Community Corrections	13	IT	7
Emergency Management	1	Land Records/Taxpayer Services	16.6
Environmental Services	6	Sheriff	92
Finance	4	Vet Services	3
Approved Staff Count			318.7

Motion carried.

Date: December 30, 2024

Res. #111-24

RESOLUTION

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 December 30, 2024, at the Government Center, Austin, Minnesota.

BE IT RESOLVED THAT; the annual salary for the elected official of County Attorney for Mower County payable in bi-weekly installments, be set as follows for 2025:

County Attorney
as of 01/01/2025.....\$187,563.32

Passed and approved this 30th day of December, 2024.

Date: December 30, 2024

Res. #112-24

RESOLUTION

On motion of Commissioner Reinartz, seconded by Commissioner Sparks, the following Resolution was passed and adopted by the Mower County Board of Commissioners at a meeting held December 30, 2024, at the Government Center, Austin, Minnesota.

BE IT RESOLVED THAT; the annual salary for the elected official of County Auditor-Treasurer for Mower County payable in bi-weekly installments, be set as follows for 2024:

County Auditor-Treasurer
as of 01/01/2025.....\$117,409.19

Passed and approved this 30th day of December, 2024.

Date: December 30, 2024

Res. #113-24

RESOLUTION

On motion of Commissioner Ankeny, seconded by Commissioner Reinartz, the following Resolution was passed and adopted by the Mower County Board of Commissioners at a meeting held December 30, 2024, at the Government Center, Austin, Minnesota.

BE IT RESOLVED THAT; the annual salary for the elected official of County Sheriff for Mower County payable in bi-weekly installments, be set as follows for 2025:

County Sheriff
as of 01/01/2025.....\$155,649.34

Passed and approved this 30th day of December 2024.

Date: December 30, 2024

Res. #114-24

RESOLUTION

On motion of Commissioner Sparks, seconded by Commissioner Ankeny, the following Resolution was passed and adopted by the Mower County Board of Commissioners at a meeting held December 30, 2024, at the Government Center, Austin, Minnesota.

BE IT RESOLVED, that the annual salary for the elected official of County Commissioner for Mower County payable in bi-weekly installments, be set as follows for 2025:

County Commissioner
as of 01/01/2025.....\$26,165.04

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the 2025 Chair of the Board receive an annual bonus of \$500.00 payable at year end.

Passed and approved this 30th day of December 2024.

Motion made by Commissioner Ankeny, seconded by Commissioner Glynn, to set 2025 non-union salaries with a 2.0% increase above the 2024 rate along with applicable anniversary step increases on the wage scale. Motion carried.

Date: December 30, 2024

Res. #115-24

RESOLUTION

On motion of Commissioner Reinartz, seconded by Commissioner Glynn, the following Resolution was passed and adopted by the Mower County Board of Commissioners at a meeting held December 30, 2024, at the Government Center, Austin, Minnesota.

BE IT RESOLVED that effective January 1, 2025, a Commissioner per diem for in-county meetings, noticed special events and Board approved meetings be set as follows:

Less than 2 hours:	\$50
2 – 4 hours:	\$75
Over 4 hours or Two or more meetings on same day:	\$100

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that effective January 1, 2025, a Commissioner per diem for Out-of-County meetings, noticed special events and Board approved meetings be set at one hundred dollars (\$100) *(if meeting held virtually, per diem in accordance with in-county per diems)*

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that effective January 1, 2025, a per diem of one hundred fifty dollars (\$150) be set for the Rural MN Energy Board and Minnesota Rural Counties working committees. *(if meeting held virtually, per diem in accordance with in-county per diems)*

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that effective January 1, 2025 a per diem of one hundred fifty dollars (\$150) be set for meetings requiring overnight stays *(day with the overnight)*.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that effective January 1, 2025 a per diem for the following non-county board working committees: Extension Committee, Planning Commission, Board of Adjustment, Mower County Community Health Services Advisory Committee, State C.H.S. Advisory Committee, Joint Powers Boards, Personnel Board of Appeals and all regional or state boards, be set as follows:

Less than 2 hours	\$50
2 – 4 hours	\$75
Over 4 hours or Two or more meetings on same day	\$100

Passed and approved this 30th of December, 2024.

Motion made by Commissioner Ankeny, seconded by Commissioner Reinartz, to appoint Mitch Wenum as the Mower County Engineer for a one-year initial term effective January 1, 2025 through December 31, 2025. Motion carried.

The Board recognized County Engineer Michal Hanson for his many years of contributions for ensuring that Mower County roads and bridges were maintained for the safety of the Mower County residents. The County appreciates Mr. Hanson's choice to do a phased retirement in order to share his knowledge of Mower County roads and bridges with the new County Engineer.

Motion made by Commissioner Glynn, seconded by Commissioner Sparks, to approve the Health & Human Services accounts payable totaling \$211,725.67 Motion carried.

Motion made by Commissioner Ankeny, seconded by Commissioner Reinartz, to approve the following Commissioner warrants for payment on December 31, 2024:

<u>Vendor Name</u>	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Vendor Name</u>	<u>Amount</u>
Association Of Minnesota Counties	3,600.00	J & S Repair Inc	12,486.74
Austin Automotive LLC	47,970.51	Language Line Services	2,403.96

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CDW Government	6,539.70	Little Falls Machine, Inc.	2,687.88
CivicPlus, LLC	10,028.52	Metro Sales, Inc	5,611.75
Diamond Drugs, Inc.	2,126.74	Paape Distributing Co.	14,895.00
Emergency Automotive Technologies, Inc	24,130.03	Rohl Electric and Services LLC	4,325.46
Express Pressure Washers, Inc.	8,326.20	Streicher's	2,237.68
Finalcover LLC	7,896.00	Ziegler, Inc	3,360.19
Fortra, LLC	5,555.62	58 Payments less than 2000	33,369.68
Gallagher Benefit Services Inc	4,000.00	Final Total:	201,551.66

Motion carried.

Motion made by Commissioner Reinartz, seconded by Commissioner Glynn, to appoint Steve Gleason to the Planning Commission and the Board of Adjustment for a first 3-year term effective January 1, 2025 to December 31, 2027. Motion carried.

Motion made by Commissioner Glynn, seconded by Commissioner Sparks, to reappoint Ann Reinartz to the Planning Commission and the Board of Adjustment for a second 3-year term effective January 1, 2025 to December 31, 2027. Motion carried.

The Board acknowledged with appreciation the nine years of service provided by Taggart Medgaarden for on the Planning Commission and Board of Adjustment from 2016 through 2024.

Motion made by Commissioner Sparks, seconded by Commissioner Ankeny, to approve the Planning Commission and Board of Adjustment 2025 meeting calendar. Motion carried.

Date: December 30, 2024

Res. #116-24

RESOLUTION

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 December 30, 2024 at the Government Center, Austin, Minnesota.

WHEREAS Minnesota counties are required by law to manage solid waste in a manner that protects the state's land, air, water, and other natural resources, and public health by ensuring that certain reduction, separation and recovery, resource recovery, and proper disposal methods of solid waste is set forth in an ordinance; and,

WHEREAS, Pursuant to the Mower County Solid Waste Management Ordinance (ORD-21), the County requires any person or entity operating any solid waste facility to first obtain, and maintain, a license for the design, construction, and operation of a solid waste facility; and,

WHEREAS SKB Lansing Landfill submitted a Mower County Solid Waste Facility Application for renewal and major modification on September 30, 2024, for an expansion of a lined landfill and a design capacity of 8,539,051 cubic yards of capacity; and,

WHEREAS, after review, this application was deemed complete on November 3, 2024, in accordance with ORD-21; and,

WHEREAS, on May 15, 2020, the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) issued an operating permit (SW-514-001) to SKB Lansing Landfill, combining both WCI Austin Landfill and SKB Lansing Landfill as one operating permit; and,

WHEREAS, on September 30, 2024, SKB submitted an application to the MPCA for a major modification for an expansion of a lined landfill and a design capacity of 8,539,051 cubic yards of capacity; and,

WHEREAS in accordance with County Board Resolution #28-21 that was passed on April 13, 2021, financial assurance requirements for SKB Lansing Landfill is a \$350,000 surety bond listing the County as obligee; and,

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the Mower County Board of Commissioners hereby grants SKB Lansing Landfill a Solid Waste License for both WCI Austin Landfill and SKB Lansing Landfill as drafted by the Department and approved as to form by the County Attorney, providing operation of a Demolition Debris Landfill, Recycling Activities, and including a slope waiver, final grade slope waiver, and a separation waiver, all as described in their License, with a term that will expire on December 31, 2029.

Passed and approved this 30th day of December, 2024.

Motion made by Commissioner Ankeny, seconded by Commissioner Reinartz, to approve the Host Fee Agreement with Waste Connections Inc. for the WCI Austin (SKB Lansing) Landfill effective 2025-2030 and authorize signatures. Motion carried.

Date: December 30, 2024

Res. #117-24

RESOLUTION

On motion of Commissioner Reinartz, seconded by Commissioner Glynn, the following Resolution was passed and adopted by the Mower County Board of Commissioners at a meeting held December 30, 2024 at the Government Center, Austin, Minnesota.

WHEREAS, Mower County, hereafter referred to as "County", has a Solid Waste Ordinance prohibiting the accumulation of tires and unlicensed or inoperable vehicles; and

WHEREAS, the property located at 11994 585th Avenue, Lyle MN, Mower County, and owned by Les and Darla Tufte, hereto referred as "Tufte Property" was issued a Notice of Violation (NOV) for improper solid waste disposal on June 28th 2023; and

WHEREAS, on September 7, 2023 the County visited the Tufte Property with Deputy Pike to hand-deliver the Notice of Violation (NOV); and

WHEREAS, on April 25, 2024 the County visited the Tufte Property and confirmed that no cleanup of solid waste had occurred; and

WHEREAS, the Tufte Property was issued an Order to Abate Solid Waste by the Mower County Board of Commissioners on May 14, 2024; and

WHEREAS, on September 17, 2024 the County visited the Tufte Property, accompanied by a Deputy and solid waste cleanup contractor, to determine if any substantial cleanup had occurred, and if not, to arrange a plan for contractors to initiate the clean-up. No evidence of tires or appliance removal in the woods around the home was observed, so the County indicated it would begin cleanup in the next two weeks;

WHEREAS, on Tuesday, October 1, 2024, Hansen Hauling and Excavating (Contractor) began the removal and disposal of tires and solid waste items from the Tufte Property and advised the Owners the cost of this cleanup would be assessed to the Tufte Property pursuant to Mower County Solid Waste Ordinance, Section 19.2D; and

WHEREAS, the County expended \$65,522.14 to complete the work of disposing of tires, waste, and unlicensed or inoperable vehicles; and

WHEREAS, on December 26, 2024, the County sent a letter to Les and Darla Tufte advising that the work had been completed and provided receipts for the work that was done and advised that if the county had not been paid for the expenses by February 1, 2025, that the County Board would adopt a motion for a special assessment to be placed on the real estate taxes beginning in Year 2025; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the County does hereby assess against the property any remaining balance as of February 1, 2025 from the \$65,522.14 cost of cleanup incurred on the Tufte Property located 11994 585th Avenue, Lyle MN Mower County and owned by Les and Darla Tufte for a term of 5 years at 5% interest.

Passed and approved this 30th day of December, 2024.

Public Works Accountant Sarah Belden provided the Board with a brief update on the three work projects performed by the department for HSEM and FEMA in response to the June 2024 flooding. Two of the three projects have been completed and submitted to FEMA for reimbursement. The department expects a \$11,461.52 reimbursement for the Emergency Protective Measures project and a \$167,179.67 reimbursement for the Debris Removal project. The third project pertaining to working on roads and bridges damaged by the flooding has not yet been finalized.

Date: December 30, 2024

Res. #118-24

RESOLUTION

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 December 30, 2024 at the Government Center, Austin, Minnesota.

BE IT RESOLVED, that the County Auditor-Treasurer be authorized to make the following expenditures from the County General Revenue Funds. Payment in full to be made for all appropriations under \$5,000.00. All appropriations over \$5,000.00 to be disbursed quarterly.

COMMISSIONERS' RECORD MOWER COUNTY, MINNESOTA

SEMCAC\$6,000.00
Senior Citizen Appropriations:
 Lyle Senior Citizens.....600.00
 LeRoy Senior Citizens600.00
 Brownsdale Seniors600.00
 Sargeant Seniors.....600.00
 Adams Community Center600.00
 Mower County Senior Citizens
 Building \$40,000
 Operations \$16,00056,000.00
 Total Senior Citizen Appropriations.....59,000.00
Mower County Senior Citizens -- Chore36,000.00
Mower County Soil & Water175,000.00
Historical Society68,200.00
SEMN Initiative Fund.....1,500.00
Discover Austin19,120.00
SE MN EMS5,000.00
Mower County Ag Society – Service Contract.....45,000.00

Passed and approved this 30th day of December, 2024.

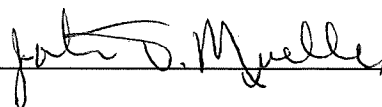
Motion made by Commissioner Reinartz, seconded by Commissioner Glynn, to approve the 2025 fee schedule. The fee schedule is on file in the office of the County Finance and Administration and available on the Mower County website at <https://www.co.mower.mn.us/DocumentCenter/View/4659/Countywide-fee-schedule-2025>
Motion carried.

Under Committee Reports Commissioner Ankeny reported he attended the Extension Committee meeting on 12/19 (*also attended by Commissioner Mueller, affirmed*) and a Finance Committee meeting also on 12/19 (*also attended by Commissioner Glynn, affirmed*). Commissioner Reinartz reported he attended a Senior Center meeting on 12/19. Commissioner Sparks reported that on 12/18 he attended a SMART meeting receiving an update on ridership numbers, funding and building changes. Commissioner Mueller reported he attended the Comprehensive Planning meeting hosted at Elkton on 12/18.

The Chair adjourned the meeting at 10:4a a.m. The next meeting is the annual meeting scheduled for January 7, 2025 at 1:00 p.m.

THE MOWER COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

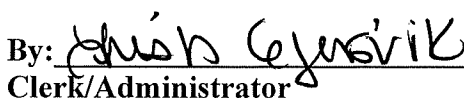
BY:



Chairperson

Attest:

By:


Clerk/Administrator