

REGULAR SESSION OF THE MOWER COUNTY  
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

April 14, 2020

The Mower County Board of Commissioners in and for the County of Mower, Minnesota, met in Regular Session April 14, 2020 at 9:00 a.m. at the Government Center in Austin, Minnesota.

All members present, viz:     Jeff Baldus, Chair  
  Polly Glynn  
  Tim Gabrielson (via phone)  
  Jerry Reinartz  
  Mike Ankeny  
  Trish Harren, County Administrator

The meeting was opened with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Motion made by Commissioner Glynn, seconded by Commissioner Ankeny, to approve the agenda. The Commissioners voted as follows: Commissioner Glynn aye, Commissioner Gabrielson aye, Commissioner Reinartz aye, Commissioner Ankeny aye, and Commissioner Baldus aye. Motion carried 5 – 0.

**HUMAN SERVICES BOARD:**

Motion made by Commissioner Ankeny, seconded by Commissioner Glynn, to approve payments in the total amount of \$185,688.75 to vendors for Human Services Accounts Payable. The Commissioners voted as follows: Commissioner Glynn aye, Commissioner Gabrielson aye, Commissioner Reinartz aye, Commissioner Ankeny aye, and Commissioner Baldus aye. Motion carried 5 – 0.

Motion made by Commissioner Reinartz, seconded by Commissioner Glynn, to approve amending the 2020 fee schedule by adding a new fee for Health & Human Services of \$80 for court costs to cover the costs of preparation, mailings, copies and court time associated with filing legal judgments on delinquent accounts. The Commissioners voted as follows: Commissioner Glynn aye, Commissioner Gabrielson aye, Commissioner Reinartz aye, Commissioner Ankeny aye, and Commissioner Baldus aye. Motion carried 5 – 0.

Director Lisa Kocer provided Human Services updates. She reported that the Department of Human Services is modifying face-to-face requirements of some services due to Covid 19. For example, child protection cases where a child is being removed from a home for safety, the law enforcement officer is sufficient to analyze the situation and a social worker does not have to be there, too. She reported that the counties remain united in not paying for the error in billing made by the Department of Human Services. She also reported that the telecommuting is going well and staff is doing a good job on checking in with clients.

Director Kocer provided a Covid-19 Mower County update. To date there have been 25 positive cases but believe the case number is 24 as one reported case for Mower County is not a resident of Mower County. There has been a delay in information coming from the State office as the department has been overwhelmed. During a phone conference, the Commissioner of Health has outlined how investigations are being organized. Of the positive cases in Mower County, three have been hospitalized of which two still remain hospitalized. The activities of the Emergency Operations Center are productive.

Motion made by Commissioner Glynn, seconded by Commissioner Ankeny to approve the Purchase of Service Agreement for funeral assistance from Czaplewski Family Funeral Home effective January 1, 2020 to December 31, 2020. The Commissioners voted as follows: Commissioner Glynn aye, Commissioner Gabrielson aye, Commissioner Reinartz aye, Commissioner Ankeny aye, and Commissioner Baldus aye. Motion carried 5 – 0.

Motion made by Commissioner Glynn, seconded by Commissioner Gabrielson, to approve the Social Service Actions. The Commissioners voted as follows: Commissioner Glynn aye, Commissioner Gabrielson aye, Commissioner Reinartz aye, Commissioner Ankeny aye, and Commissioner Baldus aye. Motion carried 5 – 0.

Motion made by Commissioner Reinartz, seconded by Commissioner Glynn, to adjourn the Human Services Board meeting 9:22 a.m. The Commissioners voted as follows: Commissioner Glynn aye, Commissioner Gabrielson aye, Commissioner Reinartz aye, Commissioner Ankeny aye, and Commissioner Baldus aye. Motion carried 5 – 0.

### **COUNTY BOARD**

The Regular Session of the Board was reconvened at 9:24 a.m. for regular business items.

Commissioner Glynn on behalf of the Finance Committee reported that the committee had further discussed the possibility of offering a property tax penalty abatement to assist the community in property tax payments due on May 15 due to the Governor's stay at home order and the closure of many businesses. A survey of townships, cities, schools and other taxing authorities has been conducted for their response on the financial impact a deferment may have on their entity. The survey indicated that the entities would support an abatement of property tax penalty for taxes due on May 15. The Finance Committee is recommending the adoption of a resolution to abate the property tax penalty through July 15, 2020 for all property tax classifications due on May 15, 2020. The Finance Committee thanks those who can, and do, pay their property taxes by the original due date to help meet the expenditures of the County and the other taxing authorities.

**Date: April 14, 2020**

**Res. #31-20**

**RESOLUTION  
REQUESTING THAT THE MOWER COUNTY AUDITOR-TREASURER  
ABATE THE PENALTY ON LATE PAYMENT OF  
PROPERTY TAXES FOR TAXES PAYABLE MAY 15, 2020**

On motion of Commissioner Glynn, seconded by Commissioner Gabrielson, the following Resolution was passed and adopted by the Mower County Board of Commissioners at a meeting held April 14, 2020 at the Government Center, Austin, Minnesota.

**WHEREAS**, on March 13, 2020, Governor Tim Walz issued Emergency Executive Order 20-01 declaring a Peacetime State of Emergency in response to the COVID-19 pandemic; and

**WHEREAS**, on March 15, 2020, Governor Walz issued Emergency Executive Order 20-02, ordering the temporary closure of all public and private schools to help slow the spread of COVID-19; and

**WHEREAS**, on March 16, 2020, Governor Walz issued Emergency Executive Order 20-04, ordering the temporary closure of bars, restaurants, and other places of accommodation to help slow the spread of the pandemic; and

**WHEREAS**, on March 16, 2020, Governor Walz issued Emergency Executive Order 20-05, providing certain relief to employers and unemployed workers during the COVID-19 emergency; and

**WHEREAS**, on March 20, 2020, Governor Walz issued Emergency Executive Order 20-20, requiring Minnesotans to stay at home; and

**WHEREAS**, Emergency Executive Order 20-05 recognizes that the economic insecurity caused by the COVID-19 pandemic will be a major concern for many Minnesotans; and

**WHEREAS**, Emergency Executive Order 20-15 recognizes that the State's response to the COVID-19 pandemic will result, either directly or indirectly, in the closure of many of Minnesota's small businesses; and

**WHEREAS**, Mower County desires to provide temporary relief to its residents and businesses within the County that have been directly or indirectly impacted by the economic pressures caused by the COVID-19 pandemic; and

**WHEREAS**, Mower County recognizes that as a result of unemployment, lost or reduced wages and the loss of business income, the prompt payment of property taxes will be a major economic pressure for many County residents this year; and

**WHEREAS**, pursuant to Minn. Stat. § 279.01, subd. 2, the County Board may, with the concurrence of the County Treasurer, abate the penalty for late payment of property taxes; and

**WHEREAS**, the County Board finds that imposing a late payment on first half of 2020 property taxes would be unjust and unreasonable; and

**WHEREAS**, the Mower County Auditor-Treasurer, County Assessor, and County Finance Manager have indicated they concur with the Board's findings;

**NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, by the Mower County Board of Commissioners as follows:

1. Pursuant to Minn. Stat. § 279.01, subd. 2, the County Board hereby delegates to the Mower County Auditor-Treasurer, County Assessor and the Finance Manager the power to abate the penalty provided in Minn. Stat. § 279.01 for the payment of property taxes after May 15, 2020 through July 15, 2020.
  
2. The adjusted tax penalty table is as follows:

Property Type:	2020										
	May 16	June 1	July 1	July 16	Aug 1	Sept 1	Oct 1	Oct 16	Nov 1	Nov 17	Dec 1
Homestead and Seasonal Rec.											
1st half	-	-	-	2%	4%	5%	6%	6%	7%	-	8%
2nd half	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2%	4%	-	5%
Both Unpaid	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4%	5.5%	-	6.5%
Agricultural Homesteads											
1st half	-	-	-	2%	4%	5%	6%	6%	7%	7%	8%
2nd half	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2%	4%
Both Unpaid	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4.5%	6%
Nonhomesteads											
1st half	-	-	-	4%	8%	9%	10%	10%	11%	-	12%
2nd half	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4%	8%	-	9%
Both Unpaid	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	7%	9.5%	-	10.5%
Agricultural Nonhomesteads											
1st half	-	-	-	4%	8%	9%	10%	10%	11%	11%	12%
2nd half	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4%	8%
Both Unpaid	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	7.5%	10%
Personal Property	-	-	-	8%	8%	8%	8%	8%	8%	8%	8%
Manufactured Homes											
1st half	-	-	-	-	-	8%	8%	8%	8%	8%	8%
2nd half	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	8%	8%

3. This Resolution does not limit the authority of the County Board to abate taxes or property values as otherwise provided by law.

The Commissioners voted as follows: Commissioner Glynn aye, Commissioner Gabrielson aye, Commissioner Reinartz aye, Commissioner Ankeny aye, and Commissioner Baldus aye. Passed and approved this 14<sup>th</sup> day of April, 2020 with a vote of 5 – 0.

Commissioner Ankeny on behalf of the Building Committee reported that he had spoken with fair representatives and the purple ribbon plaza restrooms are close to

completion, hand sanitizers are being placed at all building entrances and plans for the fair continue until otherwise directed.

Commissioner Ankeny on behalf of the Solid Waste Committee informed the Board that a complaint communication had been received from Blooming Prairie indicating that since the Mower County recycling collections have been suspended due to Covid-19 that the Blooming Prairie's collection site has been overwhelmed. A discussion followed without any formal action. Health and safety of Cedar Valley employees remains a priority. Recycling services will not resume until training protocols are in place and there is PPE for workers. The Mower County recycling services are currently scheduled to be resumed May 4.

Motion made by Commissioner Ankeny, seconded by Commissioner Gabrielson, to approve the minutes of April 7, 2020 subject to the review of the chair. The Commissioners voted as follows: Commissioner Glynn aye, Commissioner Gabrielson aye, Commissioner Reinartz aye, Commissioner Ankeny aye, and Commissioner Baldus aye. Motion carried 5 – 0.

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

<u>Vendor Name</u>	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Vendor Name</u>	<u>Amount</u>
Austin Daily Herald	3,793.93	MCHS SE Minnesota	2,250.35
Baudoin Oil Company	7,202.53	Metal Services of Blooming Prairie, Inc.	3,967.80
Bound Tree Medical Llc	3,631.45	Prairie Lakes Youth Programs Secure	13,129.00
Dave Lucas Consulting	5,349.88	Regents Of The University Of Minnesota	33,743.25
Department Of Corrections	16,340.00	Riverside Psychological Services	2,400.00
Donnelly Law Firm, PLLC	4,465.95	Rupp,Anderson,Squires & Waldspurger Pa	14,749.59
Falk Construction Co./L.R.	3,181.71	Slowinski Flooring	6,389.00
Freeborn County	4,213.84	THE HILLS YOUTH AND FAMILY SERVICES	19,975.82
Heartland Girls Ranch	8,106.50	Village Ranch Inc	29,301.80
Lenway Law Office	3,087.50	51 Payments less than 2000	26,514.73
Mayo Clinic	30,021.53		
		<b>Final Total:</b>	<b>241,816.16</b>

The Commissioners voted as follows: Commissioner Glynn aye, Commissioner Gabrielson aye, Commissioner Reinartz aye, Commissioner Ankeny aye, and Commissioner Baldus aye. Motion carried 5 – 0.

The St. Paul Authority has forwarded a Property Assessed Clean Energy (PACE) application with a proposed resolution to place a clean energy assessment on parcel 34.521.0080.

**Date: April 14, 2020**

**Res. #32-20**

**RESOLUTION**

On motion of Commissioner Glynn, seconded by Commissioner Ankeny, the following Resolution was passed and adopted by the Mower County Board of Commissioners at a meeting held April 14, 2020 at the Government Center, Austin, Minnesota.

**WHEREAS**, Resolution #75-17 approved a Joint Powers Agreement (JPA) with the Saint Paul Port Authority to administer the Property Assessed Clean Energy (PACE) program for Mower County: and

**WHEREAS**, The County has received a request from the Saint Paul Port Authority to place a special assessment on the following property tax parcel, pursuant to the JPA.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** That a special assessment of \$721,976.20 plus interest at 5.75% and any fees incurred shall be placed on parcel 34.521.0080 for property owner Austin Hotel Group, LLC to be amortized evenly over the twenty-year term of the assessment with the interest accrual date of January 1, 2021.

The Commissioners voted as follows: Commissioner Glynn aye, Commissioner Gabrielson aye, Commissioner Reinartz aye, Commissioner Ankeny aye, and Commissioner Baldus aye. Passed and approved this 14<sup>th</sup> day of April, 2020 with a vote of 5 – 0.

Motion made by Commissioner Reinartz, seconded by Commissioner Ankeny, to approve the 2019 County Feedlot Officer (CFO) Annual Report and authorize the chair to sign the report. The Commissioners voted as follows: Commissioner Glynn aye, Commissioner Gabrielson aye, Commissioner Reinartz aye, Commissioner Ankeny aye, and Commissioner Baldus aye. Motion carried 5 – 0.

There was a discussion about some areas of the nation and the state experiencing an increase in racism and xenophobia against persons of Asian descent during this time of the COVID-19 pandemic. It was noted that conversations with local law enforcement have indicated that officers have not been observing any increase in racial slurring or hate crimes in our area. The Commissioners noted that Mower County will not tolerate racism or xenophobia, should it become a problem it will be addressed. The Commissioners noted that Mower County has a long history of being welcoming and inclusive. This is why we have not seen an increase in problems.

Commissioner Baldus noted for the Board that there have been discussions and communications from the Association of Minnesota Counties that the Secretary of State is pushing for voting by mail. The Auditor-Treasurer's office has been receiving information and has prepared a pros and cons perspective on mail balloting. The Board may be asked to vote on this subject in the near future.

Motion made by Commissioner Glynn, seconded by Commissioner Reinartz, to adjourn the meeting at 10:01 a.m. The Commissioners voted as follows: Commissioner Glynn aye, Commissioner Gabrielson aye, Commissioner Reinartz aye, Commissioner Ankeny aye, and Commissioner Baldus aye. Motion carried 5 – 0. The next meeting is scheduled for April 28, 2020 at 9:00 a.m.

**THE MOWER COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

**BY:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Chairperson**

**Attest:**

By: \_\_\_\_\_  
**Clerk/Administrator**

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