

**MOWER COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
WORK SESSION**

June 7, 2022

The Mower County Board of Commissioners in and for the County of Mower, Minnesota, met in a Work Session on June 7, 2022 at 2:58 p.m. at the Government Center, 201 1<sup>st</sup> Street NE, in Austin, Minnesota.

All members present, viz: Chair Jeff Baldus, Vice-Chair Mike Ankeny, John Mueller, Jerry Reinartz and Polly Glynn. Also in attendance were County Administrator Trish Harren, Executive Assistant Denise Barthels, and Doug Grout and Judge Kritzer, Krissy Bartness, Megan Burroughs, Scott Springer

Judge Kritzer and Court Administrator Krissy Bartness provided the Board with an update on court case activities and the current effect of the pandemic backlog on court cases in Mower County in comparison with other counties in southeast Minnesota. There are eleven counties in the 3<sup>rd</sup> Judicial District. Weekly the courts receive a report updating the backlog. Mower County has done an excellent job of managing the backlog. This can be attributed to how quickly the Mower County courts converted to the use of on-line meetings. The use of Zoom meetings has been beneficial for those involved in the hearings as well making it easier to attend, reducing drive time back and forth for those placed outside of Mower County and less stressful for those who are placed in mental health treatment facilities. Zoom hearings have been beneficial especially for civil commitment hearings. Judge Kritzer will continue to hold these types of hearings electronically but prefers to have criminal case and child protection hearings in person.

SEMCAC Executive Director Doug Grout presented a proposal for an ARPA grant in the approximate amount of \$600,000 to establish a new / expanded Headstart facility in Austin. The request is contingent upon SEMCAC securing the funding from all available funding resources for the project. Headstart is either a home-based or center-based program for youth from birth to 5 years of age that are being prepared for educational success. There is also some summer programing. SEMCAC Headstart has outgrown its current site located at the former Holy Cross Lutheran School. The former KAAL building has been selected as a potential site. The total project is estimated at \$3,650,000,

Commissioner Baldus left the meeting at 3:52 p.m. for another engagement.

County Administrator Trish Harren indicated that the request will be reviewed by the Finance Committee.

County Administrator Trish Harren left the meeting at 3:55 p.m. for another engagement.

The remaining Commissioners asked several questions regarding SEMCAC's remodel plans of the selected site for the new Headstart facility and concerning the meals on wheels program.

The work session concluded at 4:00 p.m.

**THE MOWER COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

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

**Attest:**

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

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