

**MINUTES  
OF  
PINE COUNTY BOARD MEETING  
SPECIAL MEETING-COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE**

**March 14, 2023 – 9:00 a.m.**

**Board Room, Pine County Courthouse  
635 Northridge Drive NW  
Pine City, Minnesota**

Chair Steve Hallan called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. Present were Commissioners Josh Mohr, Terry Lovgren and Matt Ludwig. Also present was County Administrator David Minke. Due to an out-of-town commitment, Commissioner J.J. Waldhalm joined the meeting via interactive technology, pursuant to Minnesota Statute 13D.02. Commissioner Waldhalm was seen and heard at the meeting via electronic means and participated from 904 Calle Cruz Roja, Barrio Obrero, Arecibo, PR, a location open and accessible to the public.

Others Present / In Person: John Shardlow, Stantec Consulting; Hinckley Planning & Zoning Administrator Mark Perry; Hinckley Mayor Don Zeman; Bruno Mayor Douglas Blechinger; Jerry Krueger, Bruno township resident; Pine County Economic Development Coordinator Lezlie Sauter; Pine County Land Commissioner/Forester Greg Beck; Pine County Auditor-Treasurer Kelly Schroeder; and Pine County Land and Resources Manager Caleb Anderson.

Others Present / Via Electronic Means

Beth Gruber, Mille Lacs Corporate Ventures Director of Planning & Community Engagement; Jeanette Swenson, Bruno City Clerk/Treasurer; Pine County Public Works/County Engineer Mark LeBrun; Pine County Attorney Reese Frederickson; and Pine County Probation Director Terry Fawcett.

The meeting was live streamed on YouTube.

The Pledge of Allegiance was said.

**1. I-35 (Hinckley) Traffic and Tribal Economy Business Park Feasibility Study**

John Shardlow, Stantec Consulting, reviewed the traffic study and feasibility study prepared by Stantec for Mille Lacs Corporate Ventures in cooperation with Pine County and the City of Hinckley, for the proposed business park located south of TH48 and east of Interstate 35. The report provided information relating to the planning process and included analysis of traffic conditions, alternative access improvements, cost estimates, and recommendations for next steps and implementation plans. Discussion took place regarding water and sewer infrastructure, and grants and funding opportunities. Beth Gruber, MLCV, stated this project is in the very early information-gathering stage and is a long-term project. Hinckley Mayor Zeman stated the City of Hinckley is supportive of the project moving forward.

**2. Recycling and Solid Waste Management**

Land and Resources Manager Caleb Anderson provided an overview of the county recycling options and cost. Discussion was held whether to (1) continue with the five recycling sites, (2) eliminate the Bruno recycling site, (3) contract with another recycling hauler to service the Bruno site, or (4) expand curbside pickup.

**The consensus of the board** was to continue through the remainder of 2023 with the county's recycling contractor, Cloquet Riverside Recycling, including recycling at the Bruno site. This action will result in the contract being about \$31,000 over budget. The recycling program will be revisited as part of the 2024 budget process.

**3. Land Advisory Committee Report**

County Forester/Land Commissioner Greg Beck stated the Land Advisory Committee met March 1, 2023 and recommended approval of the following resolutions and authorization for the Board Chair and County Administrator to sign:

A. 2023 Tax Forfeit Land Classification (Non Conservation)

Resolution 2023-13 to classify identified lands as non-conservation lands, allow the distribution of lands to local government for review, and requests approval from the Minnesota DNR for the sale of identified parcels of non-conservation lands.

B. Withdraw of Previously Offered Land Auction Parcels

Resolution 2023-14 to allow Pine County to withdraw from sale all unsold parcels of land from past tax-forfeit public land auctions, including the September 16, 2022 tax forfeit land auction, as well all those unsold parcels that were offered at auction and limited to adjoining landowners.

C. Homestead Property Repurchase and Contract Reinstatement Deadline

Resolution 2023-15 to establish that all application requests and for repurchases and contract reinstatements must be submitted to the Pine County Auditor's Office by a deadline of July 25, 2023. After July 25, 2023, no written application request for the repurchase or contract reinstatement will be accepted for those lands to be conveyed, sold, or offered at auction in the year 2023.

Beck stated Memorial Forests land was discussed, and reviewed the five criteria for consideration of acreage for memorial forest eligibility.

- Large acreage
- Timber/resource potential
- Management access
- Environmental uniqueness
- Public recreation value

Commissioner Waldhalm stated his connectivity and the audio was not good at his location and would like to discuss Land Committee recommendations when he is able to attend in-person county board meetings.

**Motion** by Commissioner Lovgren to approve Resolution 2023-13/Tax Forfeit Land Classification, Resolution 2023-14/Withdraw of Previously Offered Land Parcels, and Resolution 2023-15/Homestead Property Repurchase and Contract Reinstatement Deadline. Second by Commissioner Ludwig. A Roll Call vote was called by Chair Hallan: District 2-Commissioner Mohr/Aye; District 3-Commissioner Lovgren/Aye; District 4-Commissioner Waldhalm/Abstain; District 5-Commissioner Ludwig/Aye; District 1-Chair Hallan/Aye. Motion carried 4-0. Commissioner Waldhalm abstained from voting.

D. Set Aside of Tax Forfeit/Timber Sale Revenues

County Auditor-Treasurer Kelly Schroeder reviewed the breakdown of the restricted funds and balances within the land department, stating the percentage for each fund remain unchanged from last year. The resolution sets aside:

- five percent (5%) of tax forfeit land sale revenues for the purposes of blight clean up,

- five percent (5%) of tax forfeit land sale and timber sale revenues for purposes of timber development, and
- twenty percent (20%) of tax forfeit land sale and timber sale revenues for the purposes of acquisition and maintenance of county parks or recreational areas.

**Motion** by Commissioner Lovgren to approve Resolution 2023-16 for Set Aside of Tax Forfeit/Timber Sale Revenues. Second by Commissioner Mohr. A Roll Call vote was called by Chair Hallan: District 2-Commissioner Mohr/Aye; District 3-Commissioner Lovgren/Aye; District 4-Commissioner Waldhalm/Abstain; District 5-Commissioner Ludwig/Aye; District 1-Chair Hallan/Aye. Motion carried 4-0. Commissioner Waldhalm abstained from voting.

E. Easement on the Abandoned Dosey Town Road

County Forester/Land Commissioner Greg Beck explained the request by Tim Gohla for a non-exclusive public easement across Memorial Forest land in New Dosey Township, which easement would be over an abandoned town road.

**It was the consensus of the board** that Resolution 2023-20 granting a nonexclusive public easement be brought back before the board for consideration after review of the easement legal description by the County Land Surveyor.

Chair Hallan called a recess at 11:25 a.m.

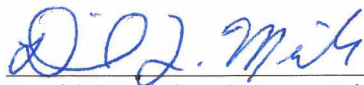
The county board meeting reconvened at 11:32 a.m.

**4. County Board Strategic Planning Review**

Economic Development Coordinator Lezlie Sauter reviewed the strategic planning process, identifying that long-term objectives and strategic actions should be added to the board's strategic plan. The board requested a special meeting / Committee of the Whole be scheduled to discuss goals and identified topics to be discussed, and requested that department heads be invited to identify areas of need within their departments and that Lezlie prepare a survey for commissioners prior to the special meeting.

With no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 12:15 p.m.

  
 Stephen M. Hallan, Chair  
 Pine County Board of Commissioners

  
 David J. Minke, County Administrator  
 Clerk to County Board