

AITKIN COUNTY BOARD

March 8, 2022

The Aitkin County Board of Commissioners met this 8th day of March, 2022 at 9:08 a.m. at the Aitkin Government Center with the following members present: Board Chair J. Mark Wedel, Commissioners Donald Niemi, Ann Marcotte, Laurie Westerlund, County Administrator Jessica Seibert, and Administrative Assistant Brittany Searle.

Motion made by Commissioner Marcotte, seconded by Commissioner Niemi and carried, all voting yes to approve the March 8, 2022 agenda.

Public Comment was given by Blake Lubinus of Ed Shaw Law on behalf of Garrison Disposal requesting the board take the order of a zoning study into consideration before a final decision is made about zoning ordinance change to transfer stations.

Motion by Commissioner Westerlund, seconded by Commissioner Niemi and carried, all members voting yes to approve the Consent Agenda as follows.

A) Correspondence File February 22, 2022 to March 8, 2022; B) Approve March 1, 2022 County Board Minutes; C) Approve Electronic Funds Transfers \$1,393,890.02; D) Approve Commissioner Vouchers: General Fund \$140,890.93, Road & Bridge \$116,120.40, Special Revenue (Unorg R&B, Fire) \$1,990.04, Health & Human Services \$20,543.31, State \$7,927.50, Trust \$4,395.19, Long Lake Conservation Center \$7,270.60, Parks \$393.72, Coronavirus Relief Fund \$30.00 for a total of \$299,561.69; E) Approve Auditor's Vouchers – Production Tax, Ambulance, and IT: General Fund \$50,382.93, Reserves Fund \$15,000, Health & Human Services \$2,720.80, Townships/Cities/ARDC/Ambulance \$127,756.00, for a total of \$195,859.73; F) Approve Manual Warrants/Voids/Corrections – FSA Claims #40118459: General Fund \$227.68, for a total of \$227.68; G) Approve Manual Warrants/Voids/Corrections – ELAN Paid 02/03/2022: General Fund \$-1,683.49, Road & Bridge \$1,047.21, Health & Human Services \$280.51, Trust \$310.77, Long Lake Conservation Center \$45.00 for a total of \$0.00; H) Approve Manual Warrants/Voids/Corrections – Camping Refund: Parks \$60.00, for a total of \$60.00; I) Approve Manual Warrants/Voids/Corrections – Banking/Invest/Analysis Fee: General Fund \$978.27, for a total of \$978.27; J) Approve Manual Warrants/Voids/Corrections – FSA Claims #40128665, Participant Fees #15983368: General Fund \$919.88, for a total of \$919.88; K) Approve Manual Warrants/Voids/Corrections – FSA Claims: General Fund \$437.38, for a total of \$437.38; L) Approve Departmental Policy Update-Highway Department M) Approve: Office 365 Annual License; N) Adopt Resolution: LG220 Permit-Wealthwood Rod & Gun Club; O) Adopt Resolution: Establish Precincts and Polling Places-Unorg Townships; P) Adopt Resolution: Sponsorship to MCIT; Q) Adopt Resolution: Search & Rescue Donation-Palisade Fire Department; R) Adopt Resolution: Search & Rescue Donation-Aitkin Lions;

Under the consent agenda, motion by Commissioner Westerlund, seconded by Commissioner Niemi and carried, all members voted to approve – Departmental Policy Update-Highway Department

Under the consent agenda, motion by Commissioner Westerlund, seconded by Commissioner Niemi and carried, all members voted to approve Office 365 Annual Licenses.

Call to Order

Approved Agenda

Citizens' Public Comment

Consent Agenda

Departmental Policy Update-HWY Department

Office 365 Annual Licenses

AITKIN COUNTY BOARD

March 8, 2022

Under the consent agenda, motion by Commissioner Westerlund, seconded by Commissioner Niemi and carried, all members voted to adopt resolution: LG220 Permit-Wealthwood Rod & Fun Club

**Resolution
#20220308-030
LGG220 Permit-
Wealthwood**

BE IT RESOLVED, The Aitkin County Board of Commissioners agrees to approve the Application for Exempt Permit – Form LG220 – of the Wealthwood Rod & Gun Club, at the following location – Wealthwood Rod & Gun Club, which has an address of 23573 420th Place, Aitkin, MN 56431 – Hazelton Township. (Note: Date of activity for Raffle – October 1, 2022)

Under the consent agenda, motion by Commissioner Westerlund, seconded by Commissioner Niemi and carried, all members voted to adopt resolution: Establish Precincts and Polling Places-Unorg Townships

**Resolution
#20220308-031
Establish
Precincts and
Polling Places**

WHEREAS, the legislature of the State of Minnesota has been redistricted; and

WHEREAS, Minnesota Statute 204B.14, subd. 3(d) requires that precinct boundaries must be reestablished within 60 days of when the legislature has been redistricted or at least 19 weeks before the state primary election, whichever comes first;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Aitkin County Board of Commissioners, acting on behalf of the unorganized townships in Aitkin County reestablishes the boundaries of the voting precincts as they currently exist and designates the polling place as follows:

Precinct:

Location:

NE Aitkin Unorganized Precinct
(51-22 & 52-22)

Mail Ballot
Government Center
307 2nd Street NW, Aitkin, MN

Unorganized Township 45-24

Mail Ballot
Government Center
307 2nd Street NW, Aitkin, MN

Unorganized Township 47-24

Mail Ballot
Government Center
307 2nd Street NW, Aitkin, MN

NW Aitkin Unorganized Precinct
(52-27, 51-27, 50-27, 49-27,
48-27, 52-24, 52-25, 51-25,

Mail Ballot
Government Center
307 2nd Street NW, Aitkin, MN

Under the consent agenda, motion by Commissioner Westerlund, seconded by Commissioner Niemi and carried, all members voted to adopt resolution: Sponsorship to MCIT

**Resolution
#20220308-032
Sponsorship to
MCIT**

AITKIN COUNTY BOARD

March 8, 2022

WHEREAS, Aitkin County is a member of the Minnesota Counties Intergovernmental Trust; and

WHEREAS, a current member of the Minnesota Counties Intergovernmental Trust must sponsor a new entity for membership; and

WHEREAS, the Aitkin Itasca Mille Lacs VCET desires to become a member for the purpose of obtaining property/casualty and general liability coverage.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that Aitkin County sponsors the Aitkin Itasca Mille Lacs VCET for membership in Minnesota Counties Intergovernmental Trust.

Under the consent agenda, motion by Commissioner Westerlund, seconded by Commissioner Niemi and carried, all members voted to adopt resolution: Search & Rescue Donation-Palisade Fire Department

WHEREAS, Aitkin County is generally authorized to accept donations of real and personal property with a 2/3 majority vote pursuant to Minnesota Statutes Section 465.03 for the benefit of its citizens.

WHEREAS, the following persons and entities have offered to contribute the cash amounts set forth below to the county:

Palisade Fire Department	\$200.00
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WHEREAS, the terms or conditions of the donations, if any, are as follows:

Palisade Fire Department	Aitkin County Search and Rescue
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WHEREAS, all such donations have been contributed to the county for the benefit of its citizens, as allowed by law.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, the Aitkin County Board of Commissioners finds that it is appropriate to accept the donations offered.

Under the consent agenda, motion by Commissioner Westerlund, seconded by Commissioner Niemi and carried, all members voted to adopt resolution: Search & Rescue Donation-Aitkin Lions

WHEREAS, Aitkin County is generally authorized to accept donations of real and personal property with a 2/3 majority vote pursuant to Minnesota Statutes Section 465.03 for the benefit of its citizens.

WHEREAS, the following persons and entities have offered to contribute the cash amounts set forth below to the county:

Aitkin Lions Club	\$500.00
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**Resolution
#20220308-033
Search & Rescue
Donation-
Palisade Fire
Department**

**Resolution
#20220308-034
Search & Rescue
Donation- Aitkin
Lions**

WHEREAS, the terms or conditions of the donations, if any, are as follows:

Aitkin Lions Club

Aitkin County Search and Rescue

WHEREAS, all such donations have been contributed to the county for the benefit of its citizens, as allowed by law.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, the Aitkin County Board of Commissioners finds that it is appropriate to accept the donations offered.

Motion by Commissioner Marcotte, seconded by Commissioner Westerlund and carried, all members present voted to adopt resolution- Mississippi River Grand Rapids One Watershed One Plan Resolution

WHEREAS, the Minnesota Board of Soil and Water Resources has developed policies for coordination and development of comprehensive watershed management plans, also known as One Watershed, One Plan, consistent with Minnesota Statutes, Chapter 103B.801, Comprehensive Watershed management Planning Programs; and

WHEREAS, Minnesota Statutes, Chapter 103B.301, Comprehensive Local Water Management Act, authorizes Minnesota Counties to develop and implement a local water management plan; and

WHEREAS, Minnesota Statutes, Chapter 103C.331, subdivision 11, Comprehensive Plan, authorizes Minnesota Soil and Watershed Conservation Districts to develop and implement a comprehensive plan; and

WHEREAS, the counties and soil and water conservation districts within the Mississippi River-Grand Rapids Watershed (Hydrologic Unit Code 07010103), as delineated in attached One Watershed, One Plan Suggested Boundary Map, have interest in developing a comprehensive watershed management plan for this area.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that Aitkin County recognizes and supports watershed-scale planning efforts consistent with Minnesota Statutes, Chapter 103B.801, also known as One Watershed, One Plan; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Aitkin County welcomes the opportunity to collaborate with the counties and soil and water conservation districts within the Mississippi River-Grand Rapids Watershed for watershed-scale planning efforts in the future; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Aitkin County supports an application to the Board of Water and Soil Resources for a planning grant to develop a comprehensive watershed management plan and anticipates entering into a Memorandum of Agreement with the counties and soil and water conservation districts, within the Mississippi River-Grand Rapids Watershed, to collaborate on this effort, pending selection as a recipient of a planning grant.

**Resolution
#20220308-035
Mississippi River
Grand Rapids
One Watershed
One Plan**

Motion by Commissioner Marcotte, seconded by Commissioner Niemi and carried, all members present voted to adopt resolution-HAVA Grant Application

**Resolution
#20220308-036
HAVA Grant**

WHEREAS, The Office of the Minnesota Secretary of State {OSS) is currently soliciting applications from jurisdictions for grants to purchase voting equipment.

WHEREAS, each county shall initially be eligible for the following maximum HAVA grant distribution amount: \$20,000 flat-rate per county + \$.287 per Voting Age Population as captured by tile 2020 U.S. Census

WHEREAS, Undistributed funds (funds not requested by counties, or funds allocated to counties for which prerequisites are not completed), as well as unspent and returned funds from counties will be subject to follow-on redistribution per a to-be- determined "2nd round" formula.

WHEREAS, The HAVA Grants Program does not require counties to match any amount of funding to be eligible to receive a grant award amount.

WHEREAS, HAVA Grants Program funds may be used by counties for any improvements or enhancements to accessibility or security of elections. OSS interprets the statutory language to extend to wider IT / network/ and physical security and accessibility improvements and enhancements to county environments (virtual and physical), so long as elections functions are covered within. While OSS may be consulted on potential uses under consideration, counties are expected and encouraged to make autonomous decisions on applicability based on statutory language, and be prepared to defend and justify those decisions if audited. Of note, HAVA Grants Program funding may be applied to meet county matching requirements under the Voting Equipment Grants Authorization {VEGA) Program.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the grant application in tile form presented to this board and to be submitted to tile Office of the Secretary of State is hereby approved; and

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the grant application in the form presented to this board and to be submitted to the Office of tile Secretary of State is hereby approved; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that tile Board directs application for any unused HAVA grant funds to be determined at a later date on the purposes for which the grant is received; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the chief elections officer of the County and staff are directed to submit this approved grant application at the earliest opportunity; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that when the grant agreement is provided to the chief elections officer of the county, Kathleen Ryan Chief Financial Officer for Aitkin County, and Elections Supervisor, that person is delegated the authority to execute that agreement and return it to tile Office of the Secretary of State without further approval by this Board.

Motion by Commissioner Marcotte, seconded by Commissioner Westerlund and carried, all members present voted to set Redistricting of Commissioner Districts Public Hearing for Tuesday, April 12, 2022 at 10:30 a.m. in the Aitkin County Government Center Board Room.

Jessica Seibert, County Administrator updated the Board on the following:

- AMC Legislative Conference
- Annual Reviews

At 10:00 a.m. Andrew Carlstrom, Environmental Services Director, held a Public Hearing to discuss amending the Aitkin County Zoning Ordinance and eliminating new captive cervid (deer) farms in Aitkin County for the board to decide at a future meeting. Janet Smude, Aitkin County, spoke against the revision. Captain Robert Gorecki, Minnesota DNR, shared facts and information to the board. Craig Engwall, Executive Director of the Minnesota Deer Hunters Association, spoke in favor of the revision. Sam Seybold, Aitkin County, spoke against. Commissioner J. Mark Wedel closed the hearing at 10:45 a.m.

Motion by Commissioner Marcotte, seconded by Commissioner Niemi and carried all members present voted to adopt resolution- Aitkin County Cervid Farm Legislation Support

WHEREAS, Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) is a contagious fatal neurodegenerative disease afflicting white tailed deer (cervids); and

WHEREAS, CWD is caused by misfolded proteins called prions, which attack the brain of infected animals, resulting in death; and

WHEREAS, CWD has spread to 26 states, three Canadian provinces, several counties in Southeast Minnesota, and now one county in Northern Minnesota (Beltrami);

WHEREAS, Nearly, all CWD-infected cervids (deer) originate in captive commercial farms, of which approximately 259 are located in Minnesota; and

WHEREAS, Minnesota wild deer are an important source of food, recreation, and tradition for our nearly 500,000 firearm and archery hunters who in turn, generate over a half billion dollars in economic activity in rural counties; and

WHEREAS, CWD spread a crisis level in Minnesota in the spring of 2021 after several CWD infected deer were found on a Beltrami County deer farm; and

WHEREAS, the owners of the Beltrami County deer farm disposed several CWD-infected deer carcasses on nearby tax-forfeited land where disease carrying prions were found in the soil, allowing for their ongoing and indefinite viability.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Aitkin County Board calls upon the Minnesota Legislature to, as soon as possible, enact legislation prohibiting new captive cervid farms in the state, and further calls upon state agencies to immediately prohibit the transport of farmed cervids within the state and halt the registration of any new captive cervid farms until such time that the legislature enacts such legislation.

**Redistricting of
Commissioner
Districts**

**Administrator
Updates**

**Cervid Farms
Public Hearing**

**Resolution
#20220308-037
Cervid Farm
Legislation
Support**

AITKIN COUNTY BOARD

March 8, 2022

RESOLVED FURTHER, That, Aitkin County Board hereby held a public hearing on Tuesday, March 9, 2022 at 10:00 AM to consider and receive public input in connection with an interim zoning ordinance lacing a moratorium on any new captive cervid farms in Aitkin County, until such time that the County Board is able to study and consider enacting a permanent ordinance.

RESOLVED FURTHER, that the Aitkin County Board of Commissioners does hereby adopt this resolution.

Motion by Commissioner Marcotte, seconded by Commissioner Westerlund and carried, all members present voted to adopt resolution – Zoning Ordinance Amendment to Appendix A Classification

WHEREAS, Aitkin County Zoning Ordinance Appendix A-Classification List contains two Solid Waste Classifications; and

WHEREAS, the need has risen for the additional classification of Solid Waste Transfer Station; and

WHEREAS, a Solid Waste Transfer Station is a less intensive use than a Solid Waste Disposal Site and shall be conditionally permitted in Farm Residential, Public, and Open zones; and

WHEREAS, Aitkin County Zoning Ordinance Appendix A-Classification List will now be more exhaustive and better serve Aitkin County citizens and Aitkin County Planning & Zoning into the future;


NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Aitkin County Board of Commissioners does hereby authorize the amendment to Appendix A-Classification List to the Aitkin County Zoning Ordinance.


The Board discussed: AMC, HHS Advisory, Aitkin Airport Commission.

Motion by Commissioner Westerlund, seconded by Commissioner Niemi and carried, all members voting yes to close meeting under statute 13D.05 Subd 3 (a) County Administrator Performance Evaluation at 11:25 a.m.

Motion by Commissioner Westerlund, seconded by Commissioner Marcotte and carried, all members voting yes to reopen meeting at 11:55 a.m.

Motion by Commissioner Westerlund, seconded by Commissioner Niemi and carried, all members voting yes to adjourn the meeting at 11:55 a.m. until Tuesday, March 9, 2021 at the Aitkin County Government Center.


J. Mark Wedel, Board Chair
Aitkin County Board of Commissioners


Jessica Seibert
County Administrator

**Resolution
#20220308-037
Zoning Ordinance
Amendment to
Appendix A
Classification**

Board Discussion

**Close Meeting
Under Statute
13D.05 Subd 3(a)**

Reopen Meeting

Adjourn