

# COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE ST. LOUIS COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

July 13, 2021

Location: Fortune Bay Resort, Tower, Minnesota

Present: Commissioners Boyle, Grimm, McDonald, Musolf, Nelson and Chair Jugovich

Absent: Commissioner Jewell

Convened: Chair Jugovich called the meeting to order at 10:39 a.m.

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## CONSENT AGENDA

Nelson/Boyle moved to approve the consent agenda. The motion passed. (7-0)

- Minutes of July 6, 2021
- Extension of Adult and Children's Mental Health Contracts [21-305R]
- Cooperative Agreement with the Minnesota Department of Transportation to Develop a Railroad Crossing Safety Plan for Railroad Crossings Located on County Roads in St. Louis County [21-306]
- Agreement with the City of Proctor for a 2nd Street Reconstruction Project [21-307]
- Abatement List for Board Approval [21-308]
- Granting of Easement to Lonson Properties, LLC [21-309]
- Request for Free Conveyance of State Tax Forfeited Land to St. Louis County – Integrated Waste Management Facility [21-310]

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## Time Specific Presentation

Chair Jugovich noted that Commissioners toured the Bois Forte Heritage Center and Cultural Museum last night.

At 10:41 a.m., Sarah Carling, Community and Business Development Specialist, Community and Economic Development Associates, and Megan Christianson, Executive Director, Visit Grand Rapids, gave a presentation to the Committee regarding the Northern Minnesota Historical Mine Tour project. Ms. Carling said that the ask of St. Louis County is \$100,000.

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## Central Management & Intergovernmental Committee

Grimm/Boyle moved that the St. Louis County Board accepts the diversity, equity and inclusion strategic planning services proposal submitted by the Center for Economic Inclusion of St. Paul, Minnesota, in the amount of \$149,200 and authorizes the appropriate county officials to enter into an agreement with the Center for Economic Inclusion for consulting services. [21-311]. Director of Human Resources and Administration Jim Gottschald said that Public Health and Human Services has been a leader and formed an inclusion group in 1995. In 2020, County Administration established a Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Leadership Group made up of department heads and high-level managers.

The DEI group was joined by members of the Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) peer support group. After a request for quotes was conducted, it is recommended that the Board approve the agreement with the Center for Economic Inclusion in the amount of \$149,200. The following members of the DEI and BIPOC groups addressed the Board: St Louis County Public Records and Property Valuation Director Mary Garness commended members for having the courage to share their stories. Mike Valdez, of Public Health and Human Services, thanked the Board for their support and acknowledged speakers for attending the meeting and sharing their stories. John Staine, of the Assessor's Office, commented that this work is important to him and likes seeing representation. Tonia Villegas, of Public Health and Human Services, said that she is a White Mexican and people assume they know you based on the way you look. Ms. Villegas discussed people making negative comments about Black, Mexican, and Native American people because they thought she was White. Ida Watson-Souther, of Public Health and Human Services, said that it has been difficult; people have looked down on her or told her that they do not want to work with her based on her skin color. Ms. Watson-Souther commented that we need to dismantle and start over because nothing has changed. Jennifer Reyes, of County Administration, said that the Center for Economic Inclusion will benefit and bring knowledge to the community and will give employees the opportunity to serve communities better. Mike Valdez introduced consultants from the Center for Economic Inclusion: De'Vonna Pittman, Director of Inclusion Growth; Samuel Ndely II, Director of Employer Inclusivity; Michael Aromolaran, Vice President of Impact & Accountability; Cay Kimbrell, Employer Inclusivity Principal Consultant; Tony Tolliver, Senior Director of Strategic Partnerships; and Genesis Sudderth, Consulting Coordinator. Ms. Pittman gave the Board a brief presentation regarding the Center for Economic Inclusion's approach and scope of services. After further discussion, the motion passed. (6-0, Jewell absent)

Nelson/Jugovich moved that the St. Louis County Board hereby appoints Tom Coombe to its Board of Adjustment for the remainder of a term ending December 31, 2023. [21-312]. The motion passed. (6-0, Jewell absent)

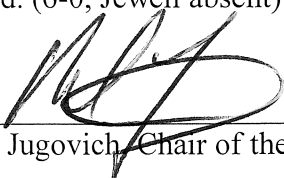
Jewell/Boyle moved that the St. Louis County Board hereby appoints Tom Coombe to its Planning Commission for the remainder of a term ending December 31, 2023. [21-313]. The motion passed. (6-0, Jewell absent)

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## COMMISSIONER DISCUSSION ITEMS AND REPORTS

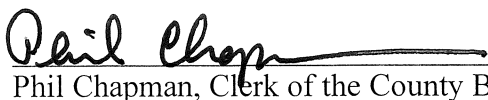
Commissioner Nelson wished best wishes to former St. Louis County Auditor Don Dicklich.

At 12:06 p.m., Boyle/Musolf moved to adjourn the Committee of the Whole meeting. The motion passed. (6-0, Jewell absent)



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Mike Jugovich, Chair of the County Board



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Phil Chapman, Clerk of the County Board