

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE ST. LOUIS COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

November 28, 2023

Location: City of Leonidas, Eveleth, Minnesota

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

Absent: None

Convened: Chair Boyle called the meeting to order at 11:20 a.m.

CONSENT AGENDA

Nelson/Musolf moved to approve the consent agenda. Item #9, 2023-24 State/Federal Lobbying Services Contract – Costin Group [23-504], was removed from the consent agenda for separate consideration. The motion passed. (7-0)

- Minutes of November 14, 2023
- Request to Accept Transition to Community Initiative Funds from Minnesota Department of Human Service [23-496]
- Albion Township Community Playground Improvement Project, American Rescue Plan Act Revenue Loss Funding [23-497]
- Meadowlands Park Project, American Rescue Plan Act Revenue Loss Funding [23-498]
- City of Buhl Youth Center Project, American Rescue Plan Act Revenue Loss Funding [23-499]
- Morcom Township Bear River Emergency Response Center, American Rescue Plan Act Revenue Loss Funding [23-500]
- Northland Foundation/Jump into Childcare, American Rescue Plan Act Revenue Loss Funding [23-501]
- Abatement List for Board Approval [23-502]
- Request to Apply for National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Climate Resilience Regional Challenge [23-503]
- 2024 Arrowhead Counties Association Lobbying Services Agreement [23-505]
- Sponsorship of the Ranger Snowmobile/ATV Club Bird Lake ATV Trail [23-506]
- Reallocation of Information Specialist I to Information Specialist II [23-507]
- Request Extension of the St. Louis County Comprehensive Local Water Management Plan [23-508]
- Amend Zoning Ordinance 62 Zoning Map, Town of Fayal [23-509]
- Award of Bid: Tree Planting [23-510]

Public Works & Transportation Committee

McDonald/Nelson moved to award a bid to Mesabi Bituminous, Inc., Gilbert, MN, in the amount of \$280,313.65 for project CP 4598-710468, SAP 069-600-051, Grading, Aggregate Base, Bituminous Paving, located on the Stuntz Bay Access Road between Jasper Street and Lake Vermilion in Breitung Township. [23-511]. The motion passed. (7-0)

Musolf/Jugovich moved to award a bid to TNT Construction Group, LLC., Grand Rapids, MN, in the amount of \$284,800 for project CP 0851-570567, SAP 069-598-075 (Br 257), Bridge 69L10 (County Bridge 257) Construction and Approaches project located on County Road 851 between County Road 847 and County Road 854 in Arrowhead Township. [23-512]. The motion passed. (7-0)

Finance & Budget Committee

Jugovich/Harala moved that the St. Louis County Board approves a financial grant contribution to the Upper Midwest Film Office (UMFO) in the amount of up to \$125,000 to administer the County's Film Program, promote Northeast Minnesota as a location for contract filming of movies, documentaries, commercials and related video media productions, and foster the local film workforce; approves a financial grant of up to \$75,000 dedicated to funding film festivals, media art schools, training, and workforce development activities, to be transferred to and administered and distributed by UMFO, subject to County approval consistent with the current process utilized with the Film Production Incentive Program; and further, that if necessary, appropriate County officials are authorized to negotiate the terms and conditions and execute appropriate grant/funding agreement(s) with the UMFO, payable from Fund 178, Agency 178006, Object 311008 or its designated fund. [23-513]. Shari Marshik, Executive Director of the Upper Midwest Film Office (UMFO), provided the Board with a handout. Ms. Marshik commented that the program brought approximately \$3.2 million to the county in 2022 and approximately \$3.1 million in 2023; approximately \$6.90 cycles through the local economy for every \$1 spent. Ms. Marshik said the county lost projects in 2023 due to the actor/writer strikes in Hollywood and limited workforce in the area. Ms. Marshik noted that UMFO has been expanding funding sources. In addition to St. Louis County funding, UMFO has received funding from the Iron Range Resources and Rehabilitation Board (IRRRB), City of Duluth service revenue and tourism tax funding, Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEE) and the Blandin Foundation. After further discussion, the motion passed. (7-0)

Jugovich/Harala moved that the St. Louis County Board approves a deposit of up to \$945,586 from Fund 178, Object 31008, to the Film Production Incentive Program Fund 178, Agency 178007, Object 629900 or its designated fund, and all program expenditures will be paid therefrom; and further, authorizes county officials to enter an agreement with an appropriate Minnesota development organization to act under the County's direction as the program administrator which will disburse such available funds in accordance with program requirements. [23-514]. The motion passed. (7-0)

Nelson/Boyle moved that the St. Louis County Board approves the accelerated phase-in of compressed longevity pay plans initially adopted in 2022 to fulfill implementation obligations for represented and unrepresented employees, effective December 16, 2023, and authorizes the appropriate county officials to execute Memorandums of Agreement with exclusive representatives of necessary collective bargaining units; approves a 3.0% county-wide market adjustment to all pay grades and salary steps for represented and unrepresented employees and for individuals covered under the management compensation plan effective December 16, 2023; and further, authorizes the appropriate County officials to execute Memorandums of Agreement with exclusive representatives of necessary collective bargaining units. [23-515]. Director of Human Resources and Administration Jim Gottschald commented that the accelerated phase-in of compressed longevity pay plans will affect approximately 20% to 25% of the county workforce. Director Gottschald said the county reviewed job classes and noticed that they are slipping further away from the midpoint. The county-wide adjustment will help the county retain employees. After further discussion, a roll call vote was taken. The motion passed without recommendation; seven yeas (Harala, Grimm, McDonald, Musolf, Nelson, Jugovich, Boyle), zero nays.

Nelson/McDonald moved that the St. Louis County Board authorizes the appropriate County officials to enter into a contract with Northeast Technical Services, Inc., to provide the engineering, design documents, inspection reports, construction certification documents, and bid packet details that satisfy all MPCA requirements, for a total amount of \$798,000 payable from 2021-2024 American Rescue Plan Act (\$598,357) Fund 239, Agency 239200, and Environmental Services Enterprise (\$199,923) Fund 600, Agency 607001; and further, that Northeast Technical Services, Inc., shall comply and submit all necessary information, documentation and reporting materials required by the County, State or US Treasury to ensure that the project meets any and all conditions as required under the American Rescue Plan Act. [23-516]. Environmental Services Director Dave Fink discussed the phased expansion plan at the Virginia Landfill. After further discussion, the motion passed without recommendation. (7-0)

Central Management & Intergovernmental Committee

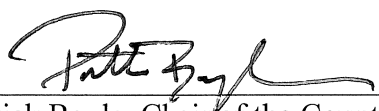
Grimm/Harala moved that the 2023-2025 Assistant County Attorney unit contract is ratified and county officials are authorized to execute the Collective Bargaining Unit Agreement. [23-517]. Director Gottschald provided the Board with an overview of the agreement and noted that the agreement includes a change in annual hours from 1950 to 2080. After further discussion, the motion passed without recommendation. (7-0)

Nelson/Harala moved to return resolution for approval of the State/Federal Lobbying Services Contract – Costin Group [23-504] to county administration to review the scope of services and funding source. Chair Boyle asked that Commissioner Grimm be involved in the discussion since she is the Chair of the Central Management and Intergovernmental Committee.

Commissioner Discussion Items and Reports

Chair Boyle said effective immediately he was establishing an NLX/Depot Board subcommittee. The committee will consist of: Commissioners Harala (Chair), Grimm, Boyle, and Nelson (alternate). Chair Boyle noted that the Association of Minnesota Counties (AMC) annual conference is being held next week.

At 1:03 p.m., McDonald/Grimm moved to adjourn the Committee of the Whole meeting. The motion passed. (7-0)



Patrick Boyle, Chair of the County Board



Phil Chapman, Clerk of the County Board

