

**MINUTES OF THE PROCEEDINGS  
OF THE BELTRAMI COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
August 20, 2024**

The Beltrami County Board of Commissioners met in regular session on August 20, 2024, at the County Board Room, County Administration Building, Bemidji, Minnesota.

**CALL TO ORDER, ROLL CALL AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Chair John Carlson, called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m. Commissioners Craig Gaasvig, Joe Gould, Tim Sumner, and Richard Anderson were present.

**GENERAL COMMENTS - BOARD CHAIR**

None.

**CITIZENS ADDRESSING THE BOARD**

CT Marhula, a County resident on Birchmont Dr. NE addressed the Board with a request for an update on a legal issue/incident that occurred a few years ago. Mr. Marhula was referred to the County Attorney.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

The following item was added to the Regular Agenda:

- County Emergency Declaration Resolution

**GENERAL BUSINESS**

Approved Agenda and Amendments

A motion to approve the Agenda and Amendments was made by Commissioner Gaasvig, seconded by Commissioner Gould, and unanimously carried.

Approved Consent Agenda

A motion to approve the Consent Agenda was made by Commissioner Anderson, seconded by Commissioner Gould, and unanimously carried.

**CONSENT ITEMS**

Approved Minutes

The Board, by adoption of its Consent Agenda, approved the Minutes of the Board of Commissioners Work Meeting held August 6, 2024, and the Minutes of the Board of Commissioners Regular Meeting held August 6, 2024, as submitted.

Approved Auditor/Treasurer Warrant Payment Listing

The Board, by adoption of its Consent Agenda, received and approved the warrant payment listing submitted by the Auditor/Treasurer's Office.

Approved Payment of Auditor/Treasurer Bills

The Board, by adoption of its Consent Agenda, approved payment of Auditor/Treasurer bills, as submitted.

Approved MnCCC TriMin IFS System Contract

The Board, by adoption of its Consent Agenda, approved ratification of the TriMin contract for maintenance and support of IFS, Integrated Financial Software, for the period January 1, 2025 through December 31, 2027, as submitted.

Approved Otter Tail Power Easement

The Board, by adoption of its Consent Agenda, approved the easements and all supporting agreements for Otter Tail Power on parcel S1/2 of NW1/4 S22-T146N-R33W, as submitted.

Approved Health & Human Services Family Child Care Licenses

The Board, by adoption of its Consent Agenda, approved the family child care licenses, as submitted.

Approved Health & Human Services Family Foster Care Licenses

The Board, by adoption of its Consent Agenda, approved the family foster care licenses, as submitted.

Approved Health & Human Services Warrant Payment List

The Board, by adoption of its Consent Agenda, received and approved the warrant payment listing submitted by Health & Human Services Department.

Approved Northern Township MOU for Project on Beach Lane

The Board, by adoption of its Consent Agenda, approved the Memorandum of Understanding defining Beltrami County as the fiscal agent for State Park Road Account Grant to Northern Township for the project on Beach Lane.

Approved Northern Township MOU for Project on Fairgrounds Road

The Board, by adoption of its Consent Agenda, approved the Memorandum of Understanding defining Beltrami County as the fiscal agent for Local Road Improvement Program Grant to Northern Township for the project on Fairgrounds Road.

Approved Resolution to Enroll Deputy Bitker in PERA Police and Fire Plan

The Board, by adoption of its Consent Agenda, approved the Resolution to Enroll Deputy Bitker in the PERA Police and Fire Plan:

BE IT RESOLVED the policy of the State of Minnesota as declared in Minnesota Statutes 353.63 is to give special consideration to employees who perform hazardous work and devote their time and skills to protecting the property and personal safety of others; and

BE IT RESOLVED Minnesota Statutes Section 353.64 permits governmental subdivisions to request coverage in the Public Employees Police and Fire plan for eligible employees of police or sheriff departments whose position duties meet the requirements stated therein and listed below.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Beltrami County Sheriff's Office, of Beltrami County hereby declares that the position, permanent Part-time Field Operations Deputy, currently held by Mason Bitker, meets all of the following Police and Fire Plan membership requirements:

1. Said position requires a license by the Minnesota peace officer standards and training board under sections 626.84 to 626.863 and this employee is so licensed;
2. Said position's primary (over 50%) duty is to enforce the general criminal laws of the state;
3. Said position charges this employee with the prevention and detection of crime;
4. Said position gives this employee the full power of arrest, and
5. Said position is assigned to a designated police or sheriff's department.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this governing body hereby requests that the named Employee be accepted as a member of the Public Employees Police and Fire Plan effective the date of this employee's initial Police and Fire Plan salary deduction by the governmental subdivision.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that County Board Chair, John Carlson, and County Administrator Tom Barry, or their successors, are hereby authorized to execute such agreements and amendments thereto, as are necessary to implement the project(s).

Approved Veteran Service Application for MN Department of Veterans Affairs Grant

The Board, by adoption of its Consent Agenda, approved the Veterans Service Office Application for the MN Department of Veterans Affairs Competitive Grant.

**REGULAR AGENDA**

2025 Employee Insurance

Human Resources Director, Ann Schroeder, reviewed the 2025 insurance rates for employee health insurance. Prime Health Insurance renewal rates came in with an average increase of 3.3%. There were no changes for non-HSA plans, no change to max out of pocket on HSA/VEBA plans, no change in family plan child/spouse rates, and an increase in employer contribution to HAS/VEBA of \$50/single and \$100/family plans, per current union contracts. All other insurances remain unchanged for 2025.

A motion was made by Commissioner Gaasvig, and seconded by Commissioner Anderson, to approve the 2025 employee insurance rates as recommended by the Labor Management Committee on Insurance: 1)Health Insurance rates with an average 3.3% increase in premium 2)Employer contribution increases of \$50/single and \$100/family plans and all other voluntary benefit plans with no changes. Carried 4:1 vote. Gould voted No.

Current PrimeHealth contract is through 2027. It was mentioned that a review of other insurance choices could be solicited at that time.

County Emergency Declaration Resolution

Chris Muller, Emergency Management Director presented information around the July 31, 2024 intense storm that went across Southern Beltrami County. By declaring an Emergency for this event, it will be possible get reimbursement from the State of MN and Federal funding for repairs from storm damages.

Resolution Declaring Beltrami County in a State of Emergency for Response to Destructive Severe Thunderstorms:

WHEREAS, Beltrami County experienced a destructive severe thunderstorm on July 31st, 2024 and numerous other weather events during the end of July and early August; and

WHEREAS, several hundred trees were downed from strong winds resulting in significant public infrastructure property damage; and

WHEREAS, substantial city, county and township resources were expended in the response and clearing of debris; and

WHEREAS, preliminary estimates indicate tens of thousands of dollars have been spent responding to the storm clean up; and

WHEREAS, Beltrami Electric Cooperative reported eligible damages to be included in the damage threshold for Beltrami County; and

WHEREAS, reimbursement assistance from the State of Minnesota may be available to assist the County and eligible applicants in recovery of this disaster; and

WHEREAS, Beltrami County has successfully participated in the State of Minnesota Disaster Assistance Recovery Account (DACA) program previously; and

WHEREAS, Beltrami County has an appointed Emergency Management Director to facilitate recovery efforts; and

WHEREAS, the Beltrami County Board of Commissioners authorizes Emergency Management Director Christopher Muller to conduct recovery efforts on behalf of the County with the Minnesota Department of Public Safety's Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management; and

WHEREAS, the Beltrami County Department of Emergency Management requests the Beltrami County Board of Commissioners declare Beltrami County in a STATE OF EMERGENCY for the response to recent severe weather.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Beltrami County Board of Commissioners declares Beltrami County in a State of Emergency for conditions resulting from severe weather this day of 20 of August, 2024 for a period of 30 days or until emergency conditions no longer exist.

A motion was made By Commissioner Gould, and seconded by Commissioner Anderson, to approve the Resolution Declaring Beltrami County in a State of Emergency for Response to Destructive Severe Thunderstorms on July 31, 2024. Unanimously carried.

#### **COMMISSIONERS' BUSINESS**

##### **Legislative/Lobbying Issues & Commissioners' Reports**

- Commissioner Gaasvig reported on several committee assignments and a 4-H Tour he attended at the County Fair.

- Commissioner Gould reported on several committee assignments.
- Commissioner Carlson reported on several committee assignments.

Review Upcoming Meeting Schedule

Next regular meeting of the County Board will be September 3, 2024, in the Board Room of the County Administration Building.

**MEETING ADJOURNMENT**

A motion to adjourn the Board meeting at 5:26 p.m. was made by Commissioner Gould, seconded by Commissioner Gaasvig, and unanimously carried.

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John Carlson, Chair

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Thomas H. Barry, County Administrator