

**MINUTES OF THE PROCEEDINGS
OF THE BELTRAMI COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
December 3, 2024**

The Beltrami County Board of Commissioners met in regular session on December 3, 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, and Richard Anderson were present. Commissioner Tim Sumner was absent.

GENERAL COMMENTS - BOARD CHAIR

None.

CITIZENS ADDRESSING THE BOARD

None.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

No additions or corrections were made to the Agenda.

GENERAL BUSINESS

Approved Agenda and Amendments

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

Approved Consent Agenda

A motion to approve the Consent Agenda was made by Commissioner Anderson, seconded by Commissioner Gaasvig, 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 November 19, 2024, and the Minutes of the Board of Commissioners Regular Meeting held November 19, 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.

Approval of 2025 Business Renewals

The Board, by adoption of its Consent Agenda, approved the 2025 renewals of Business Licenses, including Liquor, Wine/Strong Beer, Set-up, 3.2, Tobacco and Auctioneer, as submitted.

Approval of 2025 Legislative Lobbyist Contract

The Board, by adoption of its Consent Agenda, approved the 2025 Government Relations Proposal from Flaherty & Hood and authorize the expenditure of \$30,000 for services as submitted.

Approval of Airport Authority Position Appointment

The Board, by adoption of its Consent Agenda, approved and accepted the Airport Authority's recommendation to appoint John Knorr to the Airport Authority Board.

Approval of 2025 Legal Newspaper Designation

The Board, by adoption of its Consent Agenda, approved designation of the legal newspaper for the year 2025 to the Bemidji Pioneer.

Approval of Parenting Solutions Contract

The Board, by adoption of its Consent Agenda, approved the Health & Human Services 2025 Contract with Parenting Solutions, 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.

Approval of 2025 Social Services Contracts

The Board, by adoption of its Consent Agenda, approved a list of contracts included in the 2025 County Social Services budget, as submitted.

Approval of Local Option Transit Sales Tax Public Hearing Date

The Board, by adoption of its Consent Agenda, approved the Local Option Transit Sales Tax Public Hearing date for December 17, 2025, at 5:00 pm, as submitted.

Approval of Fidler Software Renewal

The Board, by adoption of its Consent Agenda, approved and signed the 5 year life cycle (AVID) extension software agreement and Schedule D Addendum.

Approval of EMBER Services Agreements

The Board, by adoption of its Consent Agenda, approved the service agreements with Sanford Health to provide SUD and Mental Health Services in the County Jail, as submitted.

Approval of Resolution of Support for 9 County C&D Group to Apply for Recycling Grant Program

The Board, by adoption of its Consent Agenda, approved the Resolution of support for the 9 County C&D Group to apply for the EPA Solid Waste Infrastructure for Recycling (SWIFR) Grant Program:

WHEREAS, the State of Minnesota (MN) is in the process of changing the rules which regulate the operation of unlined Construction and Demolition Debris (C&D) landfills. All changes would require the closure of all unlined C&D landfills that do not capture and treat leachate; and

WHEREAS, many of these C&D landfills are already subsidized by the Counties in which they are located to reduce the tip fees charged for materials. The intent of the subsidy is to discourage illegal disposal which would lead to environmental degradation and harmful Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions; and

WHEREAS, the cost to modify these C&D landfills to meet the new rules is not economically feasible for small volume facilities in very rural areas. The result is most of the small unlined C&D landfills have indicated they will close once the rules are implemented; and

WHEREAS, many of the smallest and most vulnerable C&D landfills in MN are found within our nine (9) County region of Northwest MN (9 County Group) which includes: Beltrami, Cass, Clearwater, Hubbard, Mahnomen, Marshall, Norman, Red Lake and Polk Counties; and

WHEREAS, numerous underserved or disadvantaged communities, identified as Environmental Justice (EJ), reside within this nine (9) County region, including the three (3) Tribal Nations of Leech Lake, Red Lake and White Earth, of which the 9 County Group is working in cooperation and partnership with; and

WHEREAS, the 9 County Group have engaged in a cooperative effort to organize and develop a "Hub & Spoke" system to replace these C&D landfills likely to be closed. Hubbard County, one of the 9 County Group, was selected to lead this cooperative effort to secure a SWIFR grant to fund this Hub & Spoke system; and

WHEREAS, if SWIFR funds are awarded to the 9 County Group's Hub & Spoke project, Hubbard County would provide an equitable distribution of the funds across the 9 Counties to establish the Spokes and one County to establish a Hub to serve those Spokes; and

WHEREAS, the project would result in the reuse, recycling or composting of C&D wastes which otherwise would be disposed of in unlined C&D Landfills; and

WHEREAS, the project would result in the creation of new, or expansion of existing, infrastructure to increase waste diversion activities such as recycling, reuse, composting and special material handling and provide an environmentally protective disposal option for materials that cannot be diverted; and

WHEREAS, the creation of the Hub & Spoke system in the 9 County region, GHG and CO emissions will be reduced by aggregating into one large load what would otherwise have required multiple small loads hauling to the Hub.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, Beltrami County supports Hubbard County (MN) efforts to secure SWIFR grant funds on behalf of the 9 County Group cooperative to implement a regional Hub & Spoke project; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, if SWIFR grant funds are allocated to the 9 County Group's regional Hub & Spoke project, Beltrami County pledges to implement its portion of the Hub & Spoke system.

REGULAR AGENDA

Swearing in of Deputy Pendleton

Sheriff Jason Riggs performed the swearing in ceremony of newly hired, Deputy Henry Pendleton.

Public Hearing - Ordinance to Regulate Cannabis Businesses

A motion was made by Commissioner Gould, and seconded by Commissioner Anderson, to open the Public Hearing on the Ordinance to Regulate Cannabis Businesses at 5:06 pm. Unanimously carried.

Environmental Services Director, Brent Rud provided a summary of the draft Ordinance.

No public comment was received.

A motion was made by Commissioner Gaasvig, and seconded by Commissioner Gould, to close the Public Hearing on the Ordinance to Regulate Cannabis Businesses. Unanimously carried.

A motion was made by Commissioner Gaasvig, and seconded by Commissioner Gould, to approve the Ordinance to Regulate Cannabis Businesses as presented. Unanimously carried.

2025 Legislative Platform

The County's 2025 Legislative Platform consisting of 9 items was presented to the Board during the Work Session.

Commissioner Gould proposed adding a tenth item to the platform around Housing. Specifically: The County Supports Legislative Proposals aimed at addressing housing shortages and affordability issues through additional State investments as well as the creation of financing mechanisms from the State, including tax credits to incentivize private investment in housing infrastructure.

A motion was made by Commissioner Gould, and seconded by Commissioner Anderson, to approve the Beltrami County 2025 Legislative Platform with the addition of a tenth item addressing Housing with the language stated. Unanimously carried.

Approval of Commissioner Salary Resolution

A motion was made by Commissioner Gould, and seconded by Commissioner Anderson, to adopt the 2025 Commissioner Salary Resolution, which includes the same increases offered to all union and non-union employees; a 3% COLA adjustment taking effect the pay period containing January 1, 2025 resulting in an annual salary of \$36,919.67. Unanimously carried.

WHEREAS, the Beltrami County Board of Commissioners is responsible for setting compensation of county employees, elected officials, appointed officials and board members; and

WHEREAS, the Beltrami County Board of Commissioners considered the duties and responsibilities of each individual position; and

WHEREAS, the Beltrami County Board of Commissioners considered the salaries of elected officials in other comparable counties;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Beltrami County Board of Commissioners approve setting the County Commissioners salary at \$36,919.67 annually, excluding per diem payments, for the calendar year 2025.

Approval of Commissioner Per Diem Rates Resolution

Administrator Barry distributed a revised copy of the Proposed Resolution with a correction to the language in the per diem rates paragraph to align with language in the Commissioner's Per Diem Policy. Clarification was also made regarding the Household

Hazardous Waste Committee; it should remain on the list and the Public Transit Joint Powers should be removed, as it no longer exists.

Commissioner Gould suggested adding the following committees to the per diem list:

- MN Rural Counties - was approved for per diem in January 2024
- Opioids Settlement
- NACO
- Bemidji Day at the Capitol
- Management Team
- Budget
- Negotiations
- Jail Committees
- Land Review
- Law Library
- Community Health Assessment
- Community Health Board-related committees
- Policies Committee

A motion was made by Commissioner Gould, and seconded by Commissioner Anderson, to approve the Resolution to set the per diem rates and committee list for reimbursement, which are the same as they were in 2024, and include the addition of the MN Rural Counties (MRC), retaining the Household Hazardous Waste Committee and removal of the Public Transit Joint Powers Board.

A motion amendment was made by Commissioner Gould to add Opioids Settlement, NACO, Bemidji Day at the Capitol, Management Team, Budget, Negotiations, Jail Committees, Land Review, Law Library, Community Health Assessment, Community Health Board-related committees, and Policies Committees to the per diem list. Motion died for lack of a second.

A motion amendment was made by Commissioner Gould to add NACO, Bemidji Day at the Capitol, Budget, and Negotiations committees to the per diem list. Motion died for lack of a second.

A motion amendment was made by Commissioner Gould to add Budget and Negotiations Committees to the per diem list. Motion died for lack of a second.

Original motion carried unanimously.

WHEREAS, the various members of the Beltrami County Board of Commissioners from time to time are obligated by law, appointment, or duty to attend several functions of their office at times other than regular Board meetings, and;

WHEREAS, Minnesota Statute 375.055 provides for establishment of a schedule of per diem payment for said activities, and;

WHEREAS, the following duties, committees, or commissions are deemed as eligible committees:

Association of Minnesota Counties (including Policy Committees)
Behavioral Health Community Collaborative
Beltrami Area Service Collaborative (BASC)
Beltrami County Township Officers (BATO)
Beltrami HRA
Bemidji Regional Airport Authority Board
BiCAP
Blackduck Ambulance
Blackduck EMS Joint Powers Board
Cass Lake Fire Association
ConCon/PILT Fund Committee
Ditch Committees
Fair Board
Greater Bemidji
Headwaters Regional Dev Board (HRDC)
Hope House Board
Housing Trust Fund Board of Trustees
Household Hazardous Waste
Joint Airport Zoning Board (JAZB)
Joint Powers Natural Resource Board
Kitchigami Regional Library Board
Land of the Dancing Sky AAA
MN Rural Counties (MRC)
Mississippi Headwaters Board
Northern Lights Library Board
Northwest Juvenile Center Board
Northwest Regional Radio Board
One Watershed/One Plan 1W1P Policy Committee – Mississippi Headwaters
One Watershed/One Plan 1W1P Policy Committee – Upper/Lower Red Lake
One Watershed/One Plan 1W1P Policy Committee – Thief River Falls
Polk County Incinerator Advisory Board
PrimeHealth Board
PrimeWest Health System
State Community Health Services (SCHAC) Advisory Committee

Also, any official committee or subcommittee identified as eligible for per diem at a Regular County Board Meeting, and as appointed by the County Board of Commissioners through the course of the year.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that members of the Beltrami County Board of Commissioners be permitted per diem payments, in alignment with the Commissioners Per Diem Policy, as follows: Tier 1 payments shall be \$50.00 and Tier 2 payments shall be \$75.00. This

authorization is contingent on the request for payment per diem and mileage being submitted within 60 days of the date of the meeting or meetings.

Set Board Meeting Schedule for 2025

The Board was in agreement during the Work Session to change the Chat-about schedule to the Wednesday following a board meeting at 9:30 am. They also made the following changes to the Management Team Schedule:

- April 9 to Commissioner Gaasvig
- July 9 to Commissioner Gould
- August 13 Commissioner Gould
- September 10 Commissioner Carlson

A motion was made by Commissioner Gaasvig, and seconded by Commissioner Anderson to approve the Board Meeting Schedule for 2025 with changes to the Chat-about schedule and Management Team schedule as discussed. Unanimously carried.

COMMISSIONERS' BUSINESS

Legislative/Lobbying Issues & Commissioners' Reports

- Commissioner Gaasvig provided several committee updates
- Commissioner Gould provided several committee updates and asked other members of the board for approval to make a hotel reservation for Saturday before the AMC conference that begins Sunday afternoon, in lieu of a Tuesday night reservation as he will not be staying for the Wednesday events.

A motion was made by Commissioner Gould to authorize a hotel reservation for Saturday, December 7, the day prior to the Annual AMC Conference. Motion died for lack of a second.

- Commissioner Carlson gave a shout-out the Veteran Services Director, Shane Gustafson on his work to secure the MN Department of Veteran Affairs Competitive Grant for the Northern Warriors Outreach Program. It was discussed that authorization of temporary ARPA dollars may be necessary if the Grant requirements cannot accommodate pre-spending of funds.

Review Upcoming Meeting Schedule

Next regular meeting of the County Board will be December 17, 2024, in the Board Room of the County Administration Building.

MEETING ADJOURNMENT

A motion to adjourn the Board meeting at 5:41 p.m. was made by Commissioner Anderson, seconded by Commissioner Gaasvig and unanimously carried.

John Carlson, Chair

Thomas H. Barry, County Administrator

TRUTH IN TAXATION/BUDGET MEETING AGENDA

Meeting opened at 6:00 pm by Board Chair John Carlson.

Chairman Carlson addressed the audience. Those in attendance with questions about property taxes and property values should meet with County Assessor, Kaleb Besser in the adjacent conference room at this time. The Public Hearing being conducted for the Budget meeting will be broken into three hearings; 1) 2025 Property Tax Levy and 2025 Budget 2) 2025 County Fee Schedule and 3) Transportation Improvement Plan.

Public Hearing

A motion was made by Commissioner Anderson, and seconded by Commissioner Gassvig, to open the Public Hearing for the 2025 Property Tax Levy and Budget. Motion carried 3:0 Gould abstained.

County Administrator, Tom Barry reviewed the Budget Process, proposed budget and proposed levy.

Citizens addressing the board:

- Joe Nipp, resident from Blackduck remarked that the budget has doubled. He asked that the County tighten their belt like everyone else.
- Patricia Heart, Resident from Cass Lake appreciated the work of the county and staff on the budget. Ms. Heart stressed

that if citizens were hoping to make changes, they should be contacting their legislators.

- Charles Biberg, resident from Tenstrike, asked if the Board gave consideration to an individual's income when estimating property taxes.
- Doug Martinka, resident from Bemidji, asked how the levy related to property taxes. Mr. Martinka also stated that the property tax statement only had one phone number on it and it would be helpful to have other relevant numbers listed as well.

A motion was made by Commissioner Anderson, and seconded by Commissioner Gassvig, to close the Public Hearing. Unanimously carried.

Adoption of the 2025 Property Tax Levy Resolution & Budget Resolution

A motion was made by Commissioner Gaasvig, and seconded by Commissioner Anderson, to approve the Resolution to establish the 2025 Property Tax Levy and the Resolution setting the 2025 Expenditure Budget.

A motion amendment was made by Commissioner Gould to add \$85,000 from County reserves to the Opioid Settlement Fund. Motion died for lack of a second.

A motion amendment was made by Commissioner Gould to add \$9,000 to the Kitchigami Library Fund - \$6,000 to Bemidji and \$3,000 to Blackduck. Motion died for lack of a second.

The original motion carried 3:1. Gould voted No.

2025 Final Levy Resolution

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Beltrami County Board of Commissioners do hereby approve the 2024 County Proposed Property Tax Levy of \$33,305,714 a Levy growth of 7.88%:

2025 Final Levy		
	2024	2025
Regular Levies (Operations)		
Revenue Fund	18,436,943	19,727,900
Human Services	8,413,234	9,509,970
Road & Bridge	2,954,761	3,004,457
	29,804,938	32,242,327
Debt Service Levies:		
Jail Debt Service	380,613	373,437
Judicial Center Debt Service	686,400	689,950
	1,067,013	1,063,387
	\$30,871,951	\$33,305,714

2025 Budget Resolution

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Beltrami County Board of Commissioners do hereby approve the 2025 County Expenditure Budget in the amount of \$118,139,910

	2024	2025
	Budget	Budget
Expenditures		
General Government	19,128,248	20,560,167
Public Safety	17,187,169	17,401,630
Highway & Streets	20,918,965	27,818,027
Sanitation	6,675,310	8,138,632
Human Services	33,823,618	34,511,712
Health	1,734,060	2,027,247
Culture & Recreation	1,076,893	1,081,673
Conservation	1,768,851	1,772,264
Economic Development	352,026	245,671
Capital Outlay	280,000	733,000
Debt Service	1,339,763	3,849,887
Total Expenditures	104,284,903	118,139,910

Adoption of the 2025 Proposed Fee Schedule

A motion was made by Commissioner Anderson and seconded by Commissioner Gaasvig to open the public hearing on the 2025 Proposed Fee Schedule. Motion carried unanimously.

Administrator Barry introduced the Fee Schedule and the three departments that would be reviewing their fee schedule changes: Brent Rud with Environmental Services, Bruce Hasbargen with Public Works and Anne Lindseth with Health and Human Services.

Environmental Services Director, Brent Rud pointed out one more change/addition to the fee schedule that was left out. The Short Term Rental Ordinance has application fees that should also be listed on the Fee Schedule.

Citizens addressing the Board:

- Charles Biberg, resident from Tenstrike asked where the monies collected from building permits went. Staff's answer was that they went to offset staff time and expenses and keep the cost off the property tax levy. Mr. Biberg also asked for clarification on what/how a data request works.

A motion was made by Commissioner Anderson, and seconded by Commissioner Gaasvig, to close the Public Hearing. Unanimously carried.

A motion was made by Commissioner Gaasvig and seconded by Commissioner Anderson to approve the 2025 Proposed Fee Schedule with the addition of the word "State" to the Cannabis License Fee, and adding the Short Term Rental Application Fees from the Short Term Rental Ordinance.

A motion amendment was made by Commissioner Gould to waive 2025 fees for building permits, septic fees and entrance fees. Motion died for lack of a second.

Original motion carried 3:1. Gould voted no.

Adoption of the Transportation Improvement Plan

A motion was made by Commissioner Anderson and seconded by Commissioner Gaasvig to open the public hearing on the 5-year Transportation Improvement Plan. Unanimously carried.

Highway Engineer Bruce Hasbargen reviewed the project list and answered questions from the Board.

Citizens addressing the Board:

Charles Biberg, resident from Tenstrike asked questions specific to what road resurfacing means.

A motion was made by Commissioner Anderson, and seconded by Commissioner Gaasvig, to close the Public Hearing. Unanimously carried.

A motion was made by Commissioner Anderson and seconded by Commissioner Gaasvig to approve the County 5-year Transportation Improvement Plan. Unanimously carried.

MEETING ADJOURNMENT

A motion to adjourn the Budget meeting at 7:05 p.m. was made by Commissioner Anderson, seconded by Commissioner Gaasvig and unanimously carried.

John Carlson, Chair