

Management Team Meeting Notes  
January 8, 2020

Department Heads/Managers Present: Pat Oman, Holly Wilson, Eric Bartusch, Mike Virnig, Ben Davis, Don Lorge, Julie Peterson, Joe Walsh, Al Heim, Mike Wimmer, Dillon Hayes, Jessie Dehn, Reed Pederson, Susan Shaw, Michele McPherson, and Kevin Schultz.

Introductions: Assistant County Administrator Holly Wilson formally introduced the new County Auditor-Treasurer, Eric Bartusch, and the new County Engineer, Jessie Dehn. Round table introductions ensued.

Personnel Report: Personnel Director Holly Wilson reviewed current staffing needs for the County.

Current Staffing Needs:

- 911 Communications Specialist – This full-time position closes on 1/17/2020.
- Building Official – Full-time position; this is a continuous posting.
- Deputy Sheriff – Part-Time, Intermittent – All full-time Deputy Sheriff positions are currently filled with one part-time, intermittent position available.
- PHN – Family Home Visiting or RN – Family Home Visiting – These full-time openings are posted in conjunction with each other; only one of the two positions will be filled.
- Sr. Engineering Project Manager or Sr. Engineering Technician – These full-time openings are posted in conjunction with each other; only one of the two positions will be filled.

Wilson reviewed the negotiation process and the insurance premiums covered by the County for non-union employees.

Administrator Report: County Administrator Pat Oman reviewed the Mille Lacs County Quarterly Newsletter timeline. Oman discussed the upcoming 2019 audit; positive feedback had been received from the State Auditor regarding the previous year's audit. Oman stated that employee badge access to the Justice Center basement would be extended for staff walking hours; an email announcement would confirm when the new hours would go into effect. Oman stated that the Sheriff's Office would move from the Cove facility to the Wahkon facility, reducing the number of buildings that the County needs to maintain. Oman stated that the legislative platform was approved at the January 7, 2020 County Board meeting. Oman discussed departmental visitor badges, economic relief loans, the approved County lobbyist, and initiative tribes.

Round Table:

- Eric Bartusch – County Auditor-Treasurer Eric Bartusch stated that the upcoming presidential nomination primary would occur on March 3, 2020. Bartusch noted that an existing lawsuit against the Republican Party of Minnesota may affect the ballot.

- Mike Virnig – Technology Services Manager Mike Virnig reviewed the new cell phone policy information. Oman stated that the County Board will review the cell phone policy at the January 21, 2020 County Board meeting. Oman noted that the transition is a cost neutral venture that will be beneficial to the County in regards to data requests. Virnig reviewed the addition of another staff member in the upcoming year, major server upgrades that will occur in 2020, in addition to the Viper System replacement in the Sheriff's Office and Jail. Virnig stated that the old website URL would be dropped on February 15, 2020.
- Ben Davis – Probation Department Director Ben Davis stated the Probation Department has been exceedingly busy; 848 offenders are currently on probation in addition to another 75-100 pretrial cases. Davis stated that the Probation Department has a new Probation Office, Lyndsey Harp.
- Don Lorge – County Sheriff Don Lorge stated that the two most recent hires are undergoing training. Lorge stated that the Sheriff's Office had a busy year with over 16,000 reports.
- Julie Peterson – Emergency Manager Julie Peterson stated that active threat training is beginning for each County department. Peterson noted that a threat reporting form is currently in development and will be available to staff on the County website in the near future.
- Joe Walsh – County Attorney Joe Walsh stated that he will be out of the office the following week, attending training in South Carolina. Walsh noted that he will be checking emails and will redirect work to the appropriate staff.
- Al Heim – County Assessor Al Heim discussed property evaluations and the 2020 assessments. Heim indicated that the proposed date for the 2020 Board of Equalization Meeting is June 13, 2020, pending County Board approval. Heim discussed the tax court petition involving Walmart.
- Mike Wimmer – Economic Development Manager Mike Wimmer discussed collaboration efforts with Lakes & Pines on the Small Cities Development Grant. Wimmer discussed Advantenon, a potential affordable housing project in Onamia, and a potential taproom/brewery in Milaca.
- Dillon Hayes – Environmental Resources Manager Dillon Hayes stated that County Ditch (CD) 2, 3, and 4 are currently in repair or will have repair. Hayes reviewed updates regarding new recycling sites, and the ORV Park. Hayes discussed drone usage and its effectiveness when evaluating County Ditches.

- Jessie Dehn – County Engineer Jessie Dehn stated that he is reviewing how the Public Works department completes tasks and projects; Dehn stated that he would like to improve processes to increase efficiency.
- Reed Pederson – Construction Services Manager Reed Pederson stated that he has been tying up a few of last year's construction projects; some delays had occurred due to weather.
- Susan Shaw – Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) Director Susan Shaw discussed the Reinvest in Minnesota (RIM) program, outreach efforts regarding wetland restoration, the SWCD tree sale, and One Watershed, One Plan (1W1P) strategy and goals.
- Michele McPherson – Land Services Director Michele McPherson stated that many inquiries have been received regarding permitting in the spring season. McPherson noted that there has been an increase in foreclosures. Thirty foreclosures have occurred within the last month; the highest number for 2019.
- Noelan Lange – Facilities Operations Manager Noelan Lange reviewed the completed boiler systems maintenance, County campus snow plowing efforts, and the emergency light work completed by local electricians.
- Kevin Schultz – Highway Maintenance Superintendent Kevin Schultz stated that with the addition of three new staff, the Public Works crew is fully staffed. Schultz noted that over 50% of the salt for County roads has already been used.

Meeting adjourned at 10:45 a.m.