

## CONFERENCE BOARD MINUTES

Thursday, August 26, 2021

Call to order

Quorum: Yes – All three units present:

### **SCHOOLS:**

Present: CAM CSD (Julie Williamson), Atlantic CSD (Laura McLean) and Griswold CSD (Don Smith)

### **MAYORS:**

Present: Anita (John KnutsOn), Atlantic (David Jones), Cumberland (Virginia Coughlin), Griswold (Brad Rhine), Lewis (Russell Hansen), Marne (Randy Baxter) and Massena (Phil Przychodzin)

Absent: Wiota (Ford Lillard)

### **SUPERVISORS:**

Present: Steve Baier, Mark O'Brien, Steve Green, John Hartkopf and Bernard Pettinger

Motion to approve Agenda by Przychodzin, seconded by McLean. Carried all ayes.

Motion to approve Minutes of May 13, 2021 at 5 PM in the Cass County Courthouse and zoom by Green, seconded by Hansen. McLean and Baxter abstained from voting. Remainder of attendees voted aye.

Old Business: none

New Business: Restructuring of Assessor's office

Przychodzin voiced his thoughts on hiring of Vanguard or another outside vender to handle appraisal work for Cass County. This would eliminate a property owner feeling favoritism or unfair assessment by a county employee doing the assessment. Having an outside company do the assessment should be open for bids. Conference Board makes the final decision.

Robert Short, a property owner, believes Vanguard is not the number one choice to provide assessment services. He believes the county should contract in the same manner as the federal government. He volunteered to assist with getting proposals. He stated he would encourage a short-term contract commitment between the county and the outside vendor. He also recommended the future Assessor have an active role in deciding who would be the outside vendor hired to handle Cass County real estate assessments.

Mary Anstey, county employee, stated several surrounding counties use Vanguard for assessment services. One reason for using Vanguard is they then defend the assessments made.

Green supported the idea of a short-term contract. He believes bids should be received and the final decision should be the Assessor's responsibility, with Conference Board approval. Jones made the comment he would like the county to use local resources to complete county assessment needs.

Baier said he had contacted other counties that contracted appraisals and believes Cass County should restructure its office by contracting for appraisal services. Costs could be reduced by eliminating the

two local appraiser positions currently staffed. He believes the responsibility for restructuring and setting the number of employees was a responsibility of the Conference Board and not the responsibility of the assessor who will be appointed this evening.

O'Brien asked the Conference Board members, "Does the Assessor office need to be restructured?"

Motion by Green: to restructure the Cass County Assessor's office by contracting for appraisal services; and to eliminate the two present field appraisal job positions. Motion seconded by Coughlin.

Roll call: McLean (school), Jones (city) and Hansen (city) voted no. All other Conference Board members voted aye. Vote: Schools - Aye; Cities - Aye; Supervisors – Aye. Carried 3-0

New Business: Appointment of County Assessor

Baier stated the upcoming Assessor would have the authority to hire and fire the Assessor office staff in accord with the positions authorized by the Conference Board. If the Assessor office needs assistance in the upcoming days/weeks, Baier had been advised by Vanguard their company would be available for assistance.

Motion by Green: to appoint Mary Anstey to fill the vacant Assessor position and to the next six year term beginning January 1, 2022. Motion seconded by Przychodzin. Roll call vote: All Conference Board members voted aye. Vote: Schools - Aye; Cities - Aye; Supervisors – Aye. Carried 3-0.

Anstey to begin September 1, 2021. Her salary will be the current Assessor salary rate prorated for the remaining months in Fiscal Year 2022.

Next Conference Board meeting was set for Thursday, October 28, 2021 at 5:00 P.M.

Green made the motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by O'Brien. All Conference Board members voted aye. Vote: Schools - Aye; Cities - Aye; Supervisors – Aye. Carried 3-0

Minutes submitted by Patricia J. Bissell, Office Manager.