

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 25, 2014

**APPROVED MINUTES OF THE
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING HELD**

**STATE OF MINNESOTA)
DODGE COUNTY)**

**COUNTY ADMINISTRATION OFFICE
MANTORVILLE, MN**

2014-04 C.O.W.

The Dodge County Commissioners met in Committee of the Whole February 25, 2014, in the Commissioner's Room at the Dodge County Courthouse Annex, Mantorville, MN, at 9:00 a.m. CST. Chair Rodney Peterson opened the meeting at 9:02 a.m. CST.

Meeting Convened

The Chair acknowledged those present:

Those Present

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| Members present: | Tim Tjosaas | District #2 |
| | Rodney Peterson | District #3 |
| | David Erickson | District #4 |
| | Steven Gray | District #5 |
| Members absent: | John Allen | District #1 |
| Also present: | Jim Elmquist | County Administrator |
| | Becky Lubahn | Deputy County Clerk |
| | Paul Kiltinen | County Attorney |
| | Lisa Kramer | Finance Director |
| | Ryan DeCook | Director of Land Records |
| | Guy Kohlnhofer | County Engineer |
| | Jim Jensen | Sheriff |

County Administrator Jim Elmquist reported that he was asked by Commissioner Rod Peterson to put the Kasson-Dodge County Ice Arena Agreement on the agenda to be discussed in light of recent meetings the county has had with the City of Kasson. The agreement was included in the Board packet for review and questions were raised as to how the agreement is currently drafted and if it's acceptable to the current County Board.

Ice Arena
Agreement
Discussion

Mr. Elmquist noted that a question was raised recently as to what the benefits and drawbacks are to the arena agreement as to how it's currently drafted. Finance Director Lisa Kramer, Deputy County Clerk Becky Lubahn and the County Administrator comprised a list of benefits and possible burdens which was shared with the Board.

One key aspect that is noticeable between the two parties is that there is a noticeable difference in priorities which was stated at the meeting with the City of Kasson. The two key values listed by the county were to allow for Agricultural Society use during the County Fair and to have some aspect of financial control in the form of a Joint Powers Board (or some semblance of for the county). The City of Kasson sees the agreement as not broken with demonstrated stronger revenues supporting that standpoint. The city believes the hockey use during the summer has demonstrated mutual benefit to both the city and the county.

Commissioner Peterson informed the Board that John Allen had previously stated that the county should just give the ice arena property to the City of Kasson.

It was Commissioner Peterson's opinion that the Fair Board wouldn't be happy if the county gave the ice arena to the City of Kasson.

Ice Arena Agreement Discussion - Continued

Commissioner Peterson reported that the ice arena has never made money, they have maintenance issues coming up that will need to be addressed and an agreement in place that doesn't allow the county a say with how the day to day operations of the ice arena are run.

Commissioner Erickson informed the Board that when the agreement was put in place, the county was agreeable with the City of Kasson running the arena. It was the Board's decision at that time to turn over the ice arena operation and ask the City of Kasson to run it.

Commissioner Erickson stated that the Board needs to decide whether they want to offer this service or not.

Commissioner Peterson pointed out that state statute is clear; it says that all structures on the fairgrounds are at the disposal of the Fair Board during the fair. Mr. Peterson commented that the Fair Board is asking for use of the building one week during the year.

Commissioner Tjosaas clarified that it's actually three weeks that the Fair Board is asking for, one week before the fair to take the ice out, one week during the fair and one week after the fair to put the ice back in.

It was Commissioner Peterson's opinion that they would only need three additional days before and after the fair to take the ice out and put it back in, so the total number of days would be approximately two weeks.

Director of Land Records Ryan DeCook was available to answer questions regarding the fairgrounds property and how the parcels are situated.

Discussion took place on the number of parcels that the fairgrounds currently sits on. It was determined that the fairgrounds sits on four parcels and that the ice arena itself sits on two separate parcels.

Discussion took place on who actually owns the land at the fairgrounds.

Commissioner Tjosaas clarified that the Fair Board doesn't own the land, the county does.

Commissioner Gray asked that Commissioner Peterson clarify which state statute he was referring to that allows the Fair Board use of the buildings during the fair.

Commissioner Peterson stated that he was referring to Minnesota State Statute 38.

Commissioner Gray referred the Board to Minnesota State Statute 38, section (b) which reads as follows:

38.01 COUNTY AGRICULTURAL SOCIETIES; FORMATION, POWERS.

Ice Arena Agreement Discussion - Continued

(b) An agricultural society shall have jurisdiction and control of the grounds upon which its fairs are held and of the streets and adjacent grounds during the fair, so far as may be necessary for fair purposes, and are exempt from local zoning ordinances throughout the year as provided in section 38.16.

The Board discussed ice arena bonding.

Commissioner Gray wanted to know what year the building bonds were paid off.

Finance Director Lisa Kramer informed the Board that she believes the bonds were paid off in 2010. Upon further review it was determined that the bonds were paid off in March of 2007. Ms. Kramer noted that the financial feasibility changed after the bonds went off the ice arena building.

Concerns with the management agreement were discussed, specifically item 7 and 8 of the agreement.

Commissioner Erickson reported that back when the agreement was approved, it was the Board's intent that the Fair Board would have use of the ice arena building until 2011.

It was Commissioner Gray's opinion that because the county has a financial responsibility for the ice arena that they should also be providing oversight in the operation of the ice arena.

Commissioner Allen arrived to the meeting at 9:15 a.m. CST.

Commissioner Allen Arrived

Commissioner Allen stated that he is ok with the county getting out of the hockey business. Mr. Allen was in favor of working with the City of Kasson to turn the ice arena over to the city if they wanted it.

Ice Arena Agreement Discussion - Continued

The Finance Director reviewed with the Board the operational deficit information that was included in the Board packet. Ms. Kramer noted that the figures listed account for the county's share of the deficit which is 50%.

Commissioner Tjosaas commented that the county needs to determine if they want to be in hockey, if not, he felt the county should let the city run the arena and build a new building for the Fair Board.

It was pointed out that the Board was running out of time to continue discussing the ice arena.

It was Commissioner Gray's opinion that they need further discussion on the ice arena issue.

The Director of Land Records suggested that the Board may want to consider a land swap with the City of Kasson if they are getting rid of the arena.

The Chair adjourned the meeting at 9:31 a.m. CST.

Meeting Adjourned

ATTEST:

RODNEY PETERSON
CHAIR, COUNTY BOARD

BECKY LUBAHN
DEPUTY CLERK

DATED: