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FOR THE YEAR 2007  
BOARD OF SUPERVISOR'S MINUTE BOOK  
CHEROKEE COUNTY, IOWA  
FEBRUARY 20, 2007

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The Cherokee County Board of Supervisors met on Tuesday, February 20, 2007 with Ron Wetherell, Mark Leeds, Dean Schmidt, Terry Graybill and Jeff Simonsen. Mike Leckband, *Chronicle Times*, was present from the press along with several interested citizens.

MSP Graybill, Leeds to approve the amended agenda and minutes of the previous meeting.

Lynde Lundquist, County Treasurer, reviewed the county's current investments and policies governing them. The Board of Supervisors expressed their desire to keep all funds within Cherokee County. The Investment Policy should be reviewed and approved every two years.

MSP Graybill, Schmidt to approve Resolution #2007-07 entitled "Cherokee County Investment Policy".

Monthly Officers meeting began with Lynde Lundquist, County Treasurer, reporting taxes are starting to come in and driver's license fees are being reviewed by legislature.

Lisa Langlitz, Community Services Director, discussed state vs. local management of mental health funds. She is working with the County Attorney on disputed claims and will contact the state DHS to see what can be done.

Dawn Jones Coombs, County Recorder, reported the Vitals Bill passed the senate and is in the house for approval. This bill has the potential for increased revenues for county recorders.

Conservation Director, Ginger Vietor, gave an update on the remodeling of the lodge at Silver Sioux Recreation Area. Restrooms and a kitchenette are being added. Educational programs are busy in the local schools.

Aimee Barritt, Environmental Health/EMS Director, explained that all county EMS coordinators are now required to take a 2-week training course to be certified. Grants will now be awarded regionally and to qualify for grant money, the county must show a need. Aimee is working on a study to evaluate Cherokee County's EOC (Emergency Operations Center). This study could indicate a need for an improved EOC and therefore may qualify for grant money.

Dave Scott, County Sheriff, indicated everything is going well in his office. The new vehicles are in place and working out well.

Larry Clark, County Engineer, reported on insulating county sheds for energy efficiency and complimented the snow crew on doing a good job of getting out early to clear the roads.

MSP Leeds, Schmidt to accept a resignation letter from Dave Ladwig. Mr. Ladwig is one of two persons who represent the Board of Supervisors on the Local Compensation Board.

MSP Schmidt, Leeds to appoint Jeff Simonsen as Cherokee County's representative on the Siouxland Regional Housing Authority with Terry Graybill as alternate.

MSP Graybill, Leeds to approve Amendment #2 of the Cherokee Aviation Authority Agreement. This authorizes the airport authority to use 60% of the county's annual levy for operating costs and 40% to be retained in a capital reserve fund.

MSP Graybill, Simonsen to approve signing of Resolution #2007-06, Loss of Federal Entitlement Benefits. This resolution urges Congress to allow federal financial

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participation of medical benefits for incarcerated individuals until convicted and sentenced. Currently, all medical costs are borne solely by counties.

Dr. Thomas Gary, representing the Board of Health (BOH), addressed those in attendance. After much discussion at their last meeting, the BOH voted to terminate all discussions pertaining to the public health department as they see no reason to go on. Gary indicated that everything seems to be working well and there is not a problem to be solved. The BOH formally rejected the proposal made by Cherokee Regional Medical Center (CRMC), citing it was too vague. Gary further explained that before considering contracting for services, the BOH would need to ensure that a provider could properly address the following issues: 1. Appropriate space for the services 2. Competent personnel to provide the services 3. Acceptable plan to transitions clients 4. Effective billing system.

Gary expressed concern over the management of services. Currently the public health staff works autonomously and the BOH only spends 1 hour 4 times a year to oversee the program. What would the BOH's management role be in a contract situation? He went on to read Iowa Code Chapter 137.5 which addresses the BOH's jurisdiction over public health. The Board of Supervisors is required by law to appoint a Board of Health. The BOH is required to provide and oversee public health services. Gary indicated that the BOH would need space and funding available to do their job of overseeing public health services. At a minimum, they would need a public health nurse administrator and an executive secretary. He would prefer that the current employees stay in those positions, but other persons could be trained to do these jobs.

Gary discussed the budgets for the current and upcoming year. The average cost to taxpayers has been about \$45,000 per year over the last 16 years. Current 2006/2007 year expenses are budgeted at \$545,802 with expected revenues of \$450,233. The difference is a tax asking of \$95,569. The proposed budget for 2007/2008 was requested at \$597,168 expenses and \$524,526 revenues. This reduces the tax asking to \$72,642. Terry Graybill questioned why the expected revenues are up almost \$75,000. Can the county count on that or will that turn into more expense to the taxpayer? He also asked where the \$50,000 for a recent software purchase would come from since it is not included in either budget year. Graybill went on to ask about the overhead costs of moving the public health to a different building. What will the ongoing costs to the taxpayer be? Graybill expressed concern over the status of a department who is relying on grant money to fund \$500,000 of its budget. What happens when the grants dry up?

Gary reported that the BOH would be meeting with Kim Rupp, nurse administrator, on February 28<sup>th</sup> to review her budget. He is concerned about cutting the budget because the programs are directly correlated to revenue through grants. A reduction in budget means less services and consequently reduced revenues.

Gary acknowledged that the public health dept does offer duplicated services that are available through other providers in the county, but this gives people health care choices. Mark Leeds stated that it doesn't matter if you call it choices or competition, it still is not right for government to offer the same services as a private business. The business can never win because of the property taxes that subsidize the governmental entity. Gary stated that the BOH doesn't feel they compete, but are an additional provider to offer choices.

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Dean Schmidt asked why the State Public Health Dept made a presentation to all 99 counties in Iowa advising the supervisors that they are not to provide duplicated services if it wasn't an issue that needs looking in to. Graybill stated that this is not something Cherokee County has just dreamed up. Many counties have their public health services provided through a local hospital and many more counties are making that move.

Gary stated that he does not think the hospital can come up with a plan that can provide what the BOH wants. Ron Wetherell expressed his doubt that there is anything that the BOH could request that the hospital would not be able to provide and stated, "I think the Cherokee Regional Medical Center is a perfect place to provide these services". Schmidt asked how the BOH could say the hospital cannot provide the services without even talking to them. Gary indicated that the BOH is not questioning the hospital's competency; they just have a lot of questions as to how services would be handled.

Schmidt asked the BOH to meet with the hospital to talk about their concerns. Gary urged the supervisors to go slow. Schmidt surmised, "We can't just stick our heads in the sand and ignore it. We are mandated to provide services and we owe it to the people to offer the best services at the best price to the taxpayers."

Gary reported that the BOH does not think there is a tax savings in the proposed plan and invited the supervisors' input when the BOH reviews the public health budget on Feb. 28<sup>th</sup>. Wetherell advised that the proposed 2007/08 budget includes \$45,000 for public health services and \$3,000 for BOH expenses which would meet the county's fiscal obligation.

Chairman Wetherell asked for any other discussion of the proposed budget.

MSP Graybill, Schmidt with all members voting aye to approve publication of the proposed 2007/2008 budget and to schedule a public budget hearing for 9:05 a.m. on March 13, 2007.

Further discussion was held in regards to potential funding problems of future budgets, additional cutbacks, and levy concerns.

There being no further business, meeting was adjourned at 12:30 p.m.

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Ronald Wetherell, Chairman

Attest: \_\_\_\_\_  
Kris Glienke, County Deputy Auditor